



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

A detailed black and white illustration of a young boy climbing a large, gnarled tree. The boy is positioned on the left side of the frame, facing right, and is reaching up with both hands to grasp a branch. He is wearing a dark, long-sleeved shirt and dark trousers. The tree's trunk is thick and textured with many vertical lines, and its branches spread out in various directions. The background is a simple, dark landscape with some foliage visible at the top left. The overall style is that of a classic children's book illustration.

THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

EDWIN C.
BURRITT

JUN 1916.8
KE126

**HARVARD COLLEGE
LIBRARY**



**THE GIFT OF
RALPH BARTON PERRY**

Professor of Philosophy

Barth Perry.

THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

A Tale of the South Seas

BY
EDWIN C. BURRITT

ILLUSTRATED BY
WALT LOUDERBACK



NEW YORK CHICAGO TORONTO
Fleming H. Revell Company
LONDON AND EDINBURGH

Jul 1916.8

✓

Copyright, 1916, by
FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY



New York: 158 Fifth Avenue
Chicago: 17 N. Wabash Ave.
Toronto: 25 Richmond St., W.
London: 21 Paternoster Square
Edinburgh: 100 Princes Street

"The Boy Scout Crusoes" is one of the very few scout stories possessing sufficient merit to warrant publication in our magazine, "Boys' Life." The market is glutted with scores of so-called Boy Scout story-books that are, by their gross exaggerations, doing our organization real harm. I earnestly hope "The Boy Scout Crusoes" may prove to be the sort of book that will help to correct such misrepresentations, and assist the promotion of our movement by making its principles and activities vital to all boys who read it.

F. R. Mathews

Chief Scout Librarian,

Boy Scouts of America.

200 Fifth Ave., New York.

CONTENTS

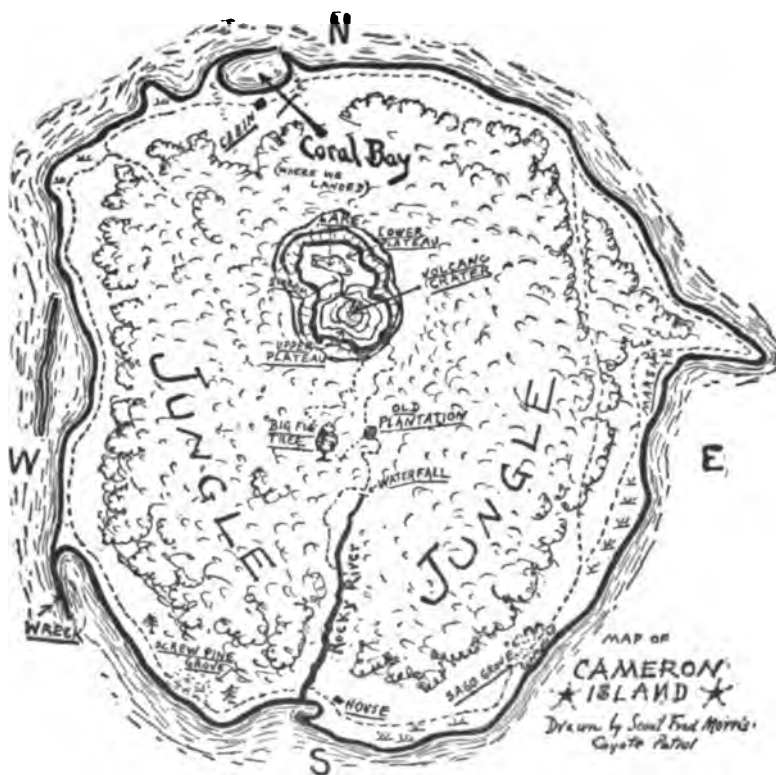
I.	A TRIP ASHORE	11
II.	THE STORM	18
III.	DESERTED	26
IV.	FOOD AND SHELTER	33
V.	NIGHT WATCHES	44
VI.	THE LAND CRAB	52
VII.	A MISERABLE NIGHT	63
VIII.	REBELLION AND DISCIPLINE	71
IX.	THE EXPLORING TRIP	80
X.	THE BABIRUSA	87
XI.	ROCKY RIVER	95
XII.	HOUSE BUILDING	104
XIII.	A SERIOUS MISHAP	114
XIV.	CRAB HUNTING. SAGO MAKING. A DROVE OF PIGS	122
XV.	SAGO CAKES AND SUGAR	131
XVI.	AROUND THE ISLAND	138
XVII.	THE WRECK	146
XVIII.	HAROLD'S FEVER	152
XIX.	FOURTH OF JULY. THE EARTH- QUAKE	163

CONTENTS

XX.	UP ROCKY RIVER	171
XXI.	THE FOREST	182
XXII.	A SURPRISING DISCOVERY . .	192
XXIII.	UP THE MOUNTAIN	202
XXIV.	IN A VOLCANO'S CRATER . . .	208
XXV.	THE LAKE	216
XXVI.	WILD CATTLE	225
XXVII.	LOST IN THE FOREST	233
XXVIII.	A STRANGE SHELTER	241
XXIX.	THE SNAKE. THE OLD PATH . .	251
XXX.	MISFORTUNES. A SAIL	260
XXXI.	RESCUE AND THE TALE OF THE FLYING FISH	269
XXXII.	HOME AGAIN	276

ILLUSTRATIONS

	FACING PAGE
The Others Stood at Attention and Sang "The Star Spangled Banner"	<i>Title</i>
The Machinery Was Disabled and the Ship Was Obligated to Trust to Her Sails	19
The Tide Had Risen. Above Them the Cliff Was Perpendicular. They Were Prisoners!	24
He Crept into the Hut and Seized Dr. Cameron by the Arm	50
The Snake Suddenly Thrust Its Ugly Head out from Among the Leaves	64
He Jumped up with a Cry, Shaking off the Intruder ..	68
He Had Run but a Few Paces When His Foot Caught and He Fell Full Length	88
Pushing His Way Forward Through the Thick Tangle, He Disappeared from View	92
Dick Dropped on His Knees and Stretched out His Arms, but the Force of Falling Water Once More Drove Bobby Under	118
Fred Built up a Big Fire with the Vague Idea That It Might Serve as a Beacon	120
"What's That?" Cried Dick. "It Looks Like a Wrecked Boat	140
Dick Was the First One to Scramble upon the Sun- bleached Remains of the Boat	146
The Sight That Met Their Eyes Was a Surprising One .	192
The Boys Were Overjoyed to Recognize Captain Mor- ton, Accompanied by a Strange Man, in the Stern .	270



I

A TRIP ASHORE

“**I**T will probably take all day to repair the engines. In the meantime perhaps you would like to go ashore.”

“That is just what I should like, Captain. I may find some interesting specimens.”

The speakers, Captain Morton and Dr. Cameron, were standing on the deck of the little schooner-rigged steamer *Flying Fish*. Surrounding them were six lads in the khaki uniform of “The Boy Scouts of America.” They were the “Coyote Patrol,” part of a troop from a college town in a Western state.

Dr. Cameron was their scoutmaster. He was visiting the South Seas for scientific purposes and the boys had come with him to see something of this interesting part of the world. They had travelled by one of the regular steamers to Honolulu and there had chartered the *Flying Fish* owned by Cap-

12 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

tain Morton. After visiting the Caroline Islands, making several stops, they had gone on their way towards New Guinea, where the Doctor had a cousin living on a ranch. It was the scoutmaster's intention to leave the other lads with this cousin, while he, his assistant and his elder son Roderick made an excursion into the interior.

Shortly before they reached the Molucca Passage, however, a violent hurricane struck the *Flying Fish*, driving her out of her course. Although the worst part of the storm did not last long, the wind continued to blow a gale for three days. The machinery was disabled and the ship was obliged to trust to her sails. The sky remained heavily overcast all this time so that it was impossible for the Captain to take any observations to find out where they were. For the last twenty-four hours, however, the wind had been steadily decreasing.

This morning, at daybreak, land had been discovered, which, on nearer approach, proved to be a small island. A place shallow enough for anchorage having been reached, the Captain sent the mate with a boat's crew to find out what the island was and to get

fresh water. They had just returned with the news that they had found no signs of habitation and no fresh water, although they had explored the coast for some distance from the little bay where they landed. As the sea was now comparatively smooth and the sun had come out, the Captain decided to remain here until the engines could be repaired.

"Won't you take us with you, father?" asked Roderick Cameron when he heard his father's reply to the Captain's suggestion.

"I don't know of any reason why you shouldn't go," the Doctor answered. "The mate saw no signs of either natives or wild beasts. If you will all obey orders strictly, keep close with me and not wander off by yourselves you may go."

"Hurrah," cried Dick Lynch the irrepressible, "we're going to explore a desert island."

Dr. Cameron smiled. "Hurry and get ready," he said. "You may take your knapsacks with your first aid kits, and a plate, cup, knife, fork and spoon each.

"You won't need your cooking utensils as we shall take a cold lunch to save time and

14 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

you won't need your blanket rolls. Wait a moment, though. A couple of rubber blankets might not be bad things to have when we stop for lunch. The grass and sand on tropical islands are apt to be full of unpleasant insects. Dick, you and Karl may each take a rubber blanket.

"Rod and Fred, take your axes. We shall probably need to cut our way if we go into the forest. Fred may take his rifle, too. I shall have my gun. You can divide the provisions among you and I may need your help to carry specimens.

"Away with you now and get ready. Rod, just go to Mr. Harvey's cabin and ask him if he feels well enough to go with us."

Mr. Harvey was a young man who helped Dr. Cameron in his scientific work. Like most of the others, he had been made very ill by the storm, but unlike the boys, he had not yet fully recovered. In answer to Rod's question he replied that he did not feel well enough to undertake such a trip.

Half an hour later the party were leaving the ship. The older boys helped the two sailors at the oars, while the others gazed

eagerly at the approaching island, not dreaming what that bit of land in the wide ocean was to mean to them.

The six lads were of various ages and sizes, from Fred Morris, a tall boy a little over seventeen, to Robert or Bobby Cameron, just thirteen, the baby of the patrol. Fred was the son of an army officer, who was an old friend of Dr. Cameron. He had spent the last year in Hawaii, where his father was stationed, and had joined the party at Honolulu.

Roderick Cameron, the patrol leader, a pleasant looking, blue-eyed, curly-haired lad, was some six months younger than Fred and almost as tall. Then came Karl Seidl, dark, sturdily built, wearing glasses over near-sighted brown eyes. Karl's father was one of the professors in the college to whose faculty Dr. Cameron belonged, and the boy's strong bent towards the study of plants and animals was the main reason for sending him on this trip to the Pacific Islands.

The next in age was Harold Whitney, who, though over fifteen, was not as tall and not nearly as muscular as Dick Lynch, sev-

16 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

eral months younger. Harold was quiet and bookish and his father had urged him to join the Scouts in the hope of getting him to take more interest in an active, outdoor life. This trip, Mr. Whitney thought, would be not only a help to that end but a physical benefit to the boy, who was not very strong. Richard Lynch was a lively, headstrong, red-haired lad, always ready for fun or adventure, and a very loyal Scout. Robert Cameron, the youngest of the group, was also a very enthusiastic scout.

The three older boys and Dick were all first-class Scouts, but Harold and Bobby had not yet passed out of the second class.

The Island they were gazing at so eagerly was of interesting appearance. A white sand beach, against which breakers rolled, was broken here and there by masses of rock projecting into the ocean. Cocoanut palms, with greyish-red trunks and feathery crowns leaning towards the sea, grew along the beach; farther back and running up the sides of the low mountain, that rose almost in the centre of the island, was a dense forest.

This mountain, instead of having a sharp

peak such as might be expected from the regular form of its slopes, was cut flat across the top as if, Rod said, the peak had been sliced off with a giant's knife. It was evidently volcanic, for the upper part was bare with dark furrows down the sides. Dr. Cameron explained that these probably had been made by lava streams, possibly centuries before.

A coral reef, running out from the shore and curving around almost parallel with it, formed a small bay protected from the force of the breakers. Into this harbour, through a narrow channel, the sailors steered the boat, beaching it easily on the hard sand.

It was arranged that the seamen should stay close by the boat while the others went along the shore and, if everything seemed favourable, a little way into the forest. They carried their lunch with them and planned to return by four or five o'clock.

II

THE STORM

IT'S later than I thought. We must start back at once."

The explorers had gone a little way into the forest. Interested in the tropical plants and trees, many of which were entirely new to the boys, they had not realized that the time was passing so quickly. On looking at his watch Dr. Cameron was surprised to see that it was after three o'clock.

It was easy to find the trail back, as they had been obliged in many places to cut their way through the undergrowth, and where this had not been necessary Fred and Roderick had taken care to blaze the path clearly.

"Blazing won't do any harm here in this uninhabited jungle, will it?" Rod had asked.

"Not a bit," said the scoutmaster. In the thick forest the tall, straight tree trunks stood close together like columns. Far overhead the dense foliage, intertwined with

great creepers, did not allow the sun to penetrate. A grey gloom like twilight rested over everything.

After they had been retracing their steps for perhaps half an hour, Karl said suddenly:

"Dr. Cameron, are you sure your watch is right?"

"Why, yes, Karl," answered the scout-master, surprised, "why do you ask?"

"Because," said Karl, "it seems as if it must be much later than that. I'm sure it is a great deal darker than it was when we came through here before. I know I could see that fallen tree with the orchids climbing over it much plainer then. I could distinguish the blossoms and I can't now."

Dr. Cameron paused and glanced around him. Then he looked at his watch. Fred looked at his. They agreed to a minute.

"It ~~is~~ darker," said the Doctor. "It must have clouded over. All the more reason why we should hurry back to the bay."

They made the best speed they could through the woods. Now that their attention was called to the matter they all realized

20 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

that it was much darker and from time to time they could hear the rumble of thunder.

When they came out among the scattered palm trees that skirted the edge of the forest they discovered that the sky was black with storm clouds. It had been very still in the woods, but now they could hear behind them the swishing noise of the wind swaying the tops of the trees. Before they were through the belt of palms it was thundering and lightning almost continuously and the forest behind them was roaring with the wind.

Beyond the palms lay a stretch of coarse grass leading to the shore, here a broken line of rocky cliffs with a sandy beach at their base. They were not halfway across this open ground when the wind struck them with such violence that Harold would have fallen if Dr. Cameron had not seized him by the arm. The trees behind them were twisting and bending almost to the ground and the roaring was so loud that the Doctor had to shout at the top of his voice to Fred close beside him.

"We can't get back to the bay. Run for the shelter of the rocks."

"There's a little cave down there. I noticed it as we came along the beach," Fred shouted back.

"Lead to it, then."

Dick, who was ahead, heard this and started at a run for the shore. Just then a terrific clap of thunder and blinding flash of lightning caused the boys, by one instinct, to throw themselves flat on the ground. A minute later, however, they were up and following Fred again. He led them through a break in the rocks down to the sand beach and along for a little distance under the cliff. They were sheltered here and could make better progress.

Presently he found the place—two shallow caves, scarcely more than ledges, one above the other. The boys ahead had already scrambled up when Dr. Cameron with Bobby and Harold came around a point of rock in sight of the caves. Harold was almost exhausted and had to be pushed and pulled up the cliff to the lower ledge.

The rain had begun before they reached shelter, and by the time they had stowed themselves away as well as they could in

22 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

their narrow quarters the full force of the tempest had broken loose.

The expression "raining in sheets" hardly means anything to one who has not seen a tropical storm. The rain seemed like a solid mass. Except for the flashing of the lightning it was almost as dark as night, and the combined roar of wind, rain and thunder made it impossible for the boys to hear each other speak.

Dr. Cameron, Roderick, Harold and Bobby were in the lower cave, while the others were in the upper one. The two ledges, for they were hardly more than that, were so situated that the occupants could not see from one into the other, and the roaring of the storm made it impossible to communicate between them. Bobby and Harold were crowded close to the back of the cave with Rod and the Doctor in front of them. There was scarcely room enough for them all. Fortunately the rain and wind came from landward so that they were fairly well sheltered.

For nearly three hours the storm continued with great fury. There would be short lulls from time to time and then it

would burst out again as violently as ever. There seemed to be several distinct storms of almost equal fierceness, one following close after the other. At last, however, the thunder and lightning became less frequent and severe and the wind and rain decreased slightly. When he could make himself heard Dr. Cameron called to the boys in the cave above:

"Are you all right up there?"

"All right," came Fred's answer; "but a little cramped."

The boys began to realize that they were very hungry. It was dark now and the Doctor had to flash his electric pocket light to see his watch. It was nearly half past seven.

"What have we left to eat?" he asked.

The lads rummaged their knapsacks as best they could with only the aid of the flashlight, but the remains from lunch were slight. Rod had a couple of pieces of hard pilot bread, Harold a small tin of corned beef and Bobby part of a jar of jam. This they divided among them, but it made little impression on their appetites.

"It looks as if we should have to make a night of it here," said Rod.

24 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

"I am afraid so," answered his father. "It would be hard work to find our way back to the boat in this storm and darkness."

It was still raining and blowing and it was now dark with the deep blackness of the tropical night.

"If we did succeed, we couldn't put off to the ship until morning and we have better shelter here than we would have where we landed," replied Rod.

They were so cramped in their narrow quarters that they could not make themselves very comfortable and the storm was still too noisy to make conversation easy, so the time dragged slowly enough. The younger boys stretched out as well as they could and placed their heads on the Doctor and Rod, but they found their rocky bed decidedly hard and, in spite of their weariness, could not sleep much. As the night wore on it grew rather cold and Harold, who was not used to exposure, began to shiver.

"Hello up there," Rod shouted to the boys on the ledge above. "You fellows have both of the blankets. Can't you lower one down to us?"

"We have only one," Karl called back, "Dick has the other."

"Isn't Dick up there?" cried Dr. Cameron in surprise.

"No," came Fred's answer, "just Karl and I."

"I thought he was with you. He was ahead when we started for the rocks."

"He didn't reach here with us. I don't remember seeing him after we began to run. I supposed he was back with you."

"What can have become of the boy?" exclaimed the scoutmaster. "I don't see how he got separated from us."

"He's found shelter in some other cave," said Rod. "Trust Dick to take care of himself."

"I ought to go look for him." The Doctor spoke anxiously.

"You can't," Rod replied. "Look down there."

His father leaned out over the edge of the ledge and looked down. A sudden flash of lightning showed him the waves beating against the rocky wall. The tide had risen. Above them the cliff was perpendicular. They were prisoners.

III

DESERTED

WITH the first signs of dawn the boys descended to the beach. The tide was out, the rain had ceased, and the sky had partly cleared, but the wind was still blowing a gale and the waves were running very high. The lads were stiff from their cramped positions and very hungry, but otherwise all right. All, however, were anxious about Dick.

The scoutmaster proposed that they divide into two parties and go in different directions along the shore looking for signs of the lost boy and calling his name. So Roderick, Fred and Karl started in the direction of the landing place, while the others went back along the way they had come the night before. It was of no use to look for tracks, for the ocean had covered the sand but a few hours before, and the rain, washing in torrents over the cliff, must have

completely blotted out any signs that Dick might have left in his descent.

They had, however, gone but a few hundred yards when the scoutmaster's call brought an answer.

"Hello," Dick's shout came from directly above their heads. There he was, looking down from an opening near the top of the cliff.

Dr. Cameron's voice was husky as he cried out, "Dick!—are you all right?"

"As right as can be, but hungry as a bear," came back the cheery answer. "I'll be down in a jiffy."

The Doctor fired his gun once, the signal agreed upon to let the others know that Dick had been found.

"How did you manage to get separated from us?" the scoutmaster asked as they started back.

"I don't exactly know," said the boy. "I heard Fred say there was a cave down here we could all get into. I thought I knew the place he meant and started for it.

"Then there came that awful clap of thunder and that made me put on full steam. I guess it kind of rattled me, too, for I

28 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

never looked to see if the rest were coming. I found the cave I'd noticed and scrambled in. I thought the rest of you would come before long, and before I had made up my mind you weren't coming the storm broke.

"I couldn't see a foot beyond the entrance, it rained so, and I knew you never could find the place in that downpour. But I figured that where there was one cave there must be others and that you would probably find shelter somewhere. It was of no use for me to try to find you in that storm, so I concluded that the only thing to do was to stay there and let you find me. Of course, I knew as soon as it let up you would look for me, and I figured that if I started out to look for you I'd probably miss you. If I stayed where I was you'd be sure to find me sooner or later."

"You did quite right," said the scout-master. "I'm not going to scold you for getting separated from the rest, for it might happen to anyone in such a storm. It would have been better, of course, if you hadn't been in such a hurry, but had followed Fred's lead. But when you found you had lost us you did quite right to

stay where you were and let us hunt you up."

"Weren't you frightened alone there in the storm?" Harold asked.

"Oh, no," said Dick, "I was all right and I felt quite sure the rest of you must be. Of course, it was a bit lonesome."

"Did you have anything to eat?"

"I had a couple of pieces of hard bread and half a cake of sweet chocolate. There were some sticks and dried grass in the place. I don't know how they got there. It looked as if sea birds might have nested there. So I built a little fire and with the water from my water bottle made me some hot chocolate in my cup. That helped a lot. Then I rolled up in my blanket and went to sleep. The storm woke me up a few times, but I didn't stay awake. I slept till I heard you call."

"You have a cool head, Dick," said Dr. Cameron, "and thorough good sense."

Dick's face flushed with pleasure at this praise from his scoutmaster. It more than made up to him for the discomforts of the past night.

Presently the others, who had heard the

80 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

signal, came running to meet them, and, as they made their way back towards the bay, Dick had to tell his adventures all over again and listen to those of the rest of the party.

The thought of breakfast caused them to make good speed. They followed the route by which they had come the day before. They went along the shore for some distance, then when the way was blocked by a point of rock jutting out into the ocean, they climbed the cliff and crossed an open space with the forest a short distance to the right.

After they left the shelter of the rocks the effects of the storm were everywhere plainly visible. The tall grass was bent almost flat to the ground by the force of wind and rain, while many broken and uprooted trees were to be seen along the edge of the woods. They did not stop to examine them, however, but hurried forward.

A low ridge thinly covered with palm trees shut off from view the little bay and the ocean beyond. Rod and Fred, who were a short distance ahead, were the first to ascend. Dr. Cameron, at the foot of the

ridge, saw them stop on the summit. They stood still for a moment gazing ahead of them. Then Rod wheeled suddenly and shouted. The wind blowing towards him prevented him from being heard. Seeing that he had not been understood, he began signalling with his arms. Dick, who was very quick at reading the semaphore code, translated the words aloud.

"No boat, no sailors, no ship."

The scoutmaster made no comment, but started on the run, the others after him. In a few minutes they had reached the top. There, before them, was the little harbour, its whole shore line visible. There was no boat drawn up upon the beach, no one in sight. Beyond, where the ship had been anchored, there was nothing but open sea.

The boys stood aghast. Their faces went white and Harold's eyes filled with tears. For a moment no one said a word. Then Dr. Cameron forced himself to speak.

"It's not surprising that the ship is not there," he said. "She couldn't stay at anchor out there in such a storm. She has either found a sheltered harbour somewhere along the coast, or has had to put out to

82 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

sea. We were foolish to expect anything else. I ought to have warned you that you would not find her out there where you saw her last."

"But the rowboat?" said Rod.

"I don't understand that," admitted his father. "I shouldn't have thought that the sailors would have put off to the ship without us."

"Captain Morton would be rather short-handed without them though," suggested Fred, "so perhaps he ordered them back."

"Perhaps. Let's see if they have left any message for us."

But search revealed no message or trace of the missing seamen.

IV

FOOD AND SHELTER

THEIR intense hunger and the need for action roused the boys from the sense of despair that had come over them at the sight of the deserted bay.

"I don't see anything to eat," said Harold disconsolately. "We can't fish, we haven't any tackle."

"I see at least two things that are excellent eating," the scoutmaster answered cheerfully. "There's not much danger of starving on a tropical island."

"Cocoanuts," said Rod, looking up at the palms. "What's the other thing?"

"I'll soon show you. Fred, see if you can find any fallen cocoanuts. Karl may come with me to gather the vegetables. The rest of you collect fuel and build a fire. All of you keep a close lookout for snakes and insects. Rod, you had better build a

84 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

fireplace. There are plenty of stones to do it with."

Every one fell to work at once. Roderick set about constructing a fireplace in a sheltered spot among some rocks. He walled up with stones a small oblong space, leaving an opening in front. He chinked the walls with sand and mud to make them tight, then laid across the top some flat slabs of a dull greenish rock he found on the beach, being careful to leave a hole at the back for the smoke to escape.

In the meantime the younger boys collected firewood. Dry wood was hard to find, but both Dick and Bobby were good enough scouts to know that a stick apparently soaked on the outside will often burn fairly well if split in two, the inner parts being drier than the outer. The sun and wind were rapidly drying things off, and Dick suggested that they spread the wet wood on the beach to dry. Rod was a skilful fire-builder and soon had a blaze in spite of unsatisfactory fuel.

Fred, however, did not have such good luck. He found nothing but cocoanut shells from which the meat had been extracted.

This had been done cleverly through the end of the nut and the boys wondered what sort of an animal had performed such a feat.

"There are plenty of nuts on the trees," said Fred. "We'll have to devise some scheme for getting them down."

"I have read," Harold remarked, "that if you throw stones at the monkeys they will throw cocoanuts back at you."

"A very fine plan indeed," replied Fred, "but it won't work this time, for we haven't seen any monkeys."

Dr. Cameron and Karl had better success, for they soon returned laden with fresh, green, succulent looking shoots.

"What are they?" asked Bobby. "Are they really good to eat?"

Fred took one and examined it. "I know," he said. "They are young bamboo shoots. I've eaten them. They're fine."

He then told Dr. Cameron his experience with the cocoanuts.

"Let me take your rifle," said the latter.

He selected a large bunch of nuts, took careful aim and fired, clipping the bunch off neatly. The boys were loud

86 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

in their praises of this feat of marksmanship.

The bamboo shoots were cut up and boiled in sea-water in the boys' aluminum cups. The lads pronounced them good, better than asparagus Karl said, and with the cocoanuts they made a fairly good, though not very nourishing, meal. The green nuts they thought better than ripe ones. The meat, instead of being hard, was soft like cream cheese, and the cool, refreshing water in the centre served as drink, for their water bottles were empty. The scoutmaster called their attention to the fact that the water in a young nut is always cool no matter how hot the sun is.

When breakfast was over they held a council. "If the *Flying Fish*," said Dr. Cameron, "has had to put out to sea it may be three or four days before she gets back. In the meantime we must make ourselves as comfortable as possible. There are three things we must look out for, food, water and shelter. I don't think we shall have much difficulty in finding food, though it won't always be just the kind we've been used to. Fresh water is a more serious question, but

with that from the cocoanuts we can get along fairly well."

"The cave I was in would hold us all, I think," said Dick.

"It is rather far away," answered the Doctor. "When the ship comes back they will look for us here. Then I don't like the idea of being cut off by the tide so that we can't get out. I think it would be better to build a shelter here."

"We might make a cabin of bamboo," suggested Fred, "and use the blankets for a roof."

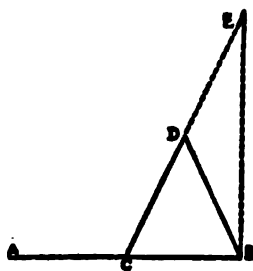
"It was something of that kind I had in mind," the scoutmaster replied. "We had better get to work at once."

Fred and Rod were sent to cut bamboo, while the others were to carry loads of it to the place Dr. Cameron had selected and to help him build the shelter. The lads were delighted with the bamboo grove. The long canes, some fresh and green, some old and turning yellow, rose above their heads waving their beautiful feathery sprays of quivering leaves. They varied greatly in size and height, the giant ones being as large around as good sized tree trunks and thirty or

38 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

forty feet high, while others were as slender as the fish poles used at home. The boys set to work with a will to cut canes of a certain size and length according to the scoutmaster's instructions.

Using a piece of heavy cord, from a ball Rod happened to have in his knapsack, and bamboo pickets, the Doctor marked out a straight line, (see diagram, A B), for the rear wall. He then drove in another picket at c. Taking another cord he made a loop



at each end and found the middle by doubling it. He placed the two loops over B and c and stretched the cord into the position B D c, driving in a stake at D, the middle of the cord. Then taking the cord B D off the stake at B, he turned it around

until it came into the position D E in prolongation of c D. Joining B and E he had the right angle needed for the corner of his cabin. It was then easy enough to get the other corners by measuring, the space marked off being about ten by fourteen feet.

With a heavy stone for a hammer he drove stout posts near the corners and at regular intervals along the sides. The bamboos to be used for the sides had been split lengthwise into halves. The Doctor laid one of the right length along the ground against the posts marking one side of the space and tied it firmly to the uprights. He placed a second on top of this and then a third, tying each firmly. He then took a whole cane the same length as the uprights, and, resting one end on the ground opposite the first of the posts, he bound it firmly in place, leaving the upper end free. This process was repeated opposite each post. The remaining split bamboos were then slipped in between these uprights, and uprights and horizontals tied together to give security. In this way a wall of bamboo rose rapidly. Rod's ball of twine was used for tying.

40 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

In spite of the increasing heat they all worked away steadily, the three older boys and Dick taking turns at the axes, until Harold, coming back to the bamboo grove for a new load, announced that Dr. Cameron had said it was time to eat.

"I'm nearly starved," said Rod a few minutes later, as he dropped his load of bamboo. "I feel as if I wanted something more substantial than coconuts."

"There are lots of sea birds around the cliffs," Karl suggested. "Perhaps we can find some eggs."

"Go and see," said the scoutmaster, "but be careful climbing around and don't go very far."

Dick and Bobby started for the beach to get some of the fuel they had spread there to dry, but were surprised to find that almost all of it had been carried away by the rising tide.

"Well," exclaimed Dick in disgust, "after this we'll keep the wood above high water mark." And they did.

It was not very long before Rod and Karl were back with their hats full of eggs.

"How will you have them, boiled or fried?" asked Rod.

"Better not boil them," was his father's answer. "You'll find a good many aren't fit to eat. You'll have to break them to find the good ones."

"But we can't fry them," Fred objected. "We haven't any grease."

"We'll poach them. I'll show you."

The Doctor partly filled a cup with sea water and set it on the stone stove to heat. He then broke an egg into a cocoanut shell, carefully so as not to break the yolk. It proved to be fresh so he turned it out into the hot water, and it poached in a few minutes. Many of the eggs were spoiled but enough fresh ones were found to more than go around. They were not so pleasant as hen's eggs, and, although cooked in salt water, they needed more salt, but the boys were very hungry and found them a welcome addition to cocoanuts and bamboo shoots.

After lunch they took a short rest, and then all went back to work on their shelter. The string was soon used up, but they succeeded with some difficulty in twisting the

42 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

tough fibres of the outer husk of the coconut into rough twine.

"Our blankets will never make a roof for this big place," said Bobby when the walls were nearly completed.

"We'll need the blankets inside," his father answered with a smile. "I've a better plan for the roof."

When the walls were finished, the ends of the split bamboos having been trimmed so that they fitted together closely at the corners, canes were laid across the top at intervals of about a foot and projecting about three feet beyond the sides.

The Doctor then took the boys to a place at the edge of the forest where a large palm tree with big, broad leaves had been broken off. This, Dr. Cameron said, was a *Borasuss* Palm, and the leaves were much used by the natives in this part of the world for thatch. There was not time that day to make a properly pitched roof with the thatch tied on as it should be, so they had to be content with a flat one. This was soon completed and the shelter for the night was ready.

The house consisted of three walls, the

end towards the sea being left open, while a square opening about half way up the rear wall served as a window and gave circulation of air. The boys covered the ground with several layers of palm leaves and on these spread the two rubber blankets.

V

NIGHT WATCHES

BY the time their not very satisfying supper of eggs, bamboo shoots and cocoanuts was over it was growing dark, for here, so near the equator, there was practically no twilight. Scarcely had a fire been built in front of the cabin and a good pile of fuel collected for the night when darkness fell. The boys gathered around the fire. At the scoutmaster's advice they had brought large stones from the shore to sit on to avoid poisonous insects that might lurk in the grass.

At first all were very silent. They were tired from the hard day's work in the tropical sun, and the feeling of excitement and sense of novelty that had kept them going had subsided with the approach of night. An almost overpowering sense of loneliness had come over them. All around was the

dark tropic night, lit up by the stars only, for the moon had not yet risen.

Their little fire merely seemed to make the darkness beyond more vast and black. In front of them was the great ocean, behind them the tropical forest, strange, utterly unknown, hiding in its depths they knew not what. No wonder the strangeness and loneliness of it all almost overwhelmed them. Dr. Cameron felt the danger of a violent case of homesickness attacking the whole party. So he roused himself and spoke cheerfully.

"Well," he said, "we've done a good day's work and are pretty comfortably fixed for the night. We are all too tired to make many plans for tomorrow, but I want to say a word about the future. We can't tell just how long it will be before Captain Morton comes back for us. The fact that we have not heard anything from him today makes me think that he had to put out to sea, and it may be several days before he can get back. I think we had better just go ahead as if we intended to camp here for some time, and make ourselves as comfortable as possible. Then if

46 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

he doesn't come for several days we shall be all right, or, if he puts in an appearance tomorrow, there's no harm done, except a little unnecessary work, perhaps."

"I have been thinking," said Roderick slowly, "that I ought to resign my position as patrol leader. Wait a minute and let me explain," he added, as the others began to protest. "It isn't because I want to shirk either work or responsibility. I'm willing to shoulder my share of both in any case. But I think Fred is better fitted to lead than I am. He has lived in the tropics and knows about a lot of things I don't know anything about. Besides, he's used to army and camp life, and has had much more experience in ways of that kind than any of the rest of us. So I want to resign in his favour. Don't you think I'm right, father?"

"Yes," answered his father thoughtfully. "I think you are. Fred is more experienced and more used to life in the tropics. Under the circumstances he ought to be the best one in the patrol for leader. I'm glad you've looked at the matter so sensibly. Unless there is some serious objection we

will accept your resignation and I will appoint Fred in your place."

Rod was a favourite with the others and had been a very successful leader, but all saw the wisdom of the change and no objections were made.

"Well," said Fred, "if I am to be leader the first thing I shall do, with Dr. Cameron's consent, is to make a plan for guard duty. Don't you think I should, Doctor?"

Dr. Cameron assented.

Fred took out his pocket note-book and began to write by the fire light. After a time he announced the guard schedule.

"We'll begin guard duty at nine," he said, "and take turns in the following order: From nine to ten, Robert Cameron; ten to eleven, Dick Lynch; eleven to twelve, Fred Morris; twelve to one, Dr. Cameron; one to two, Roderick Cameron; two to three, Fred Morris again; three to four, Karl Seidl; four to five, Harold Whitney. Every one up at five, for it's better to get the hardest part of our work done before it gets hot. Breakfast at five-thirty, dinner at eleven-thirty, after dinner rest or do light work until three, supper at six. We'll take turns at

48 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

meal getting, Harold and Rod breakfast, Bobby and I dinner, and Karl and Dick supper. The cooks must furnish wood."

"I see you haven't put me down for cook duty," said the scoutmaster, "so I'll supply wood for the watch fire at night."

"We'll all help you do that," said Dick.

Then they fell to discussing plans for the next day. The brilliant tropical moon had risen now, making a shining path across the little bay, which was heaving gently, the reef beyond breaking the force of the long ocean swells. Against the light the palms on the reef stood out in sharp black silhouette, while between their trunks the white spray, sparkling in the moonlight, was plainly visible, as the waves broke against the outer edge of the reef.

They had been quiet for some time watching the scene, when Dick stretched himself with a yawn.

"If I'm going on guard at ten," he said, "I think I'll turn in and get some sleep now."

As he started to go into the shelter, Dick gave a cry of surprise and wonder. The others turned at once. At some little dis-

tance behind the cabin stretched the dark mass of the forest. Against its deep blackness gleamed and danced and circled myriads of little flashing points of light. Never still for a moment, they danced and wavered in and out, up and down, around and about against the blackness.

"Fire-flies," exclaimed Fred.

"Millions and millions of them," said Karl in tones almost of awe. "I never expected to see anything like that in all my life."

The Doctor and the two older boys remained by the fire talking quietly until nine, when they, too, turned in, after the Doctor had waked Bobby to take first watch. The little fellow was terribly sleepy, but he roused himself bravely, went down to the beach and bathed his sleepy face, put more wood on the fire and began walking up and down beside it to keep himself awake.

The night and the stillness in this strange place made him feel very lonely. But he was a plucky lad and felt the responsibility of guard duty, so he struggled bravely with both sleepiness and loneliness. The others were only a few steps away, he kept telling

50 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

himself, and a word from him would arouse them.

The night passed quietly. During Roderrick's watch he thought he saw something moving in the outer edge of the group of cocoanut palms but he was not sure. He gazed in that direction for some time, but could make out no further movement.

Harold was roused to go on duty at four. It was still dark when he stumbled out of the shelter, sleepy and miserable. In a moment of fear he begged Karl not to leave him there alone. Karl's attempt to reassure him, however, made him a little ashamed of himself.

He heaped up fuel on the fire to make as much light as possible, and sat down facing it, close to the cabin.

It was terribly still and dark beyond the little circle of light and he half expected every moment to see some strange beast or savage man come out of that belt of blackness into the firelight. It seemed to him that he had sat there for hours when he felt himself dozing.

He looked at his watch in the firelight. It was just 4:20. The palm trees above



He Crept into the Hut and Seized Dr. Cameron by the Arm.

his head rustled in the breeze and startled him for a moment. He had read of tree snakes. Did they ever coil themselves around palm trees, he wondered, and drop down on you in the darkness? Shuddering, he resumed his seat on the stone in front of the shelter.

He must have dozed off for a moment for suddenly he was wide awake with a start. The fire was burning low again. There came to his ears from the direction of the forest a sound that sent the chills up his spine—a long drawn out wail, with something strange and unearthly about it. For a moment he could not move, then the sound came again, first far away and then nearer at hand, a strange wailing call. He crept into the hut and seized Dr. Cameron by the arm.

VI

THE LAND CRAB

“WHAT is it?” exclaimed Scoutmaster Cameron, suddenly aroused from sound sleep.

“I don’t know,” stammered the terrified Harold, “I think it must be natives, savages.”

“Where? Have you seen them?” was the startled question.

“No, but I heard—there, listen.”

The cry sounded again, close by.

Much to Harold’s amazement Dr. Cameron began to laugh. The call had sounded a third time before he offered an explanation.

“It’s an owl,” he said, “an owl, something like our screech owls, I should say.”

“An owl!” exclaimed Harold. “Can a bird make a noise like that?”

“Of course it’s an owl,” said Fred, who

was awake now. "I heard one during my last watch, or rather two. They seemed to be answering each other."

The scoutmaster rose and went out with Harold. Everything was quiet except for the calling of the two owls in the distance. The lad was much ashamed of his mistake, but during the ten minutes that remained of his watch he could not help shivering a little every time he heard the eerie, wailing call.

It was not yet daylight when the boys, sleepy and stiff, stumbled out of their little shelter. The sun did not rise until nearly six, and there was almost no dawn, day coming suddenly. Heavy, smoky-looking black and red clouds in the east threatened more rain. A bath, obtained by wading out up to their knees and throwing the water over each other, freshened the lads greatly. They did not venture farther, fearing that sharks might lurk in the little bay. Fred, Rod and Karl were lame from so much unaccustomed work with the axe, but made no complaint about it, thinking it behooved them to set an example of endurance to the younger boys. As soon as it grew light

54 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

Rod and Harold started out to look for eggs for breakfast.

"We've eaten our last cocoanut," said Fred. "You'll have to make another good shot, Dr. Cameron."

"I don't like to waste cartridges that way," the Doctor replied. "We must invent some other plan to get the nuts."

"It's a long way to shin up," and Dick looked doubtfully at the tall trunks.

"I've seen an Hawaiian climb palm trees by means of a belt," said Fred. "He fastened it around the tree and his body and used it to rest on."

"I believe I could do that," cried Dick. "Lend me your belt and I'll try."

Fastening the two belts together he buckled them around his waist and the trunk of one of the smaller trees which leaned a little towards the sea. Then he began to shin up. With the belt to rest on he got along very well, for he was a good climber, and soon reached the nuts. Selecting a large bunch, he rested on the belt with his legs clasped around the trunk, and, holding on with one hand, cut off the cluster of nuts and let it fall to the ground.

From this one tree he dropped down a good supply of nuts in various stages of ripeness, then, with the help of the belt, descended safely.

The cooks returned with their hats full of eggs. They had had no difficulty in finding them, but had been startled by coming suddenly upon a large brown snake, about four feet long, Rod thought, which was sunning itself on the rocks.

"It was so much the color of the rocks," he said, "that we didn't see it until we were almost up to it. I looked around for something to kill it with, but it slipped off into a crevice while I was picking up a big stone."

When Roderick attempted to build a fire in his stone stove it would not draw. At first he was puzzled as to what was the matter with it, until his father called his attention to the fact that the wind was in a different direction from what it had been the day before when he built the stove. By taking out a stone from the windward side and temporarily blocking up the other hole he soon had a draft, and this experience taught him to always build his stoves

56 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

with at least three openings to be used according to the direction of the wind.

During breakfast plans for the day were discussed.

"We shall have to find something more substantial for food," said the scoutmaster, "and I don't like to depend entirely on cocoanuts for drinking water. I should like to do a little more exploring."

"Some one ought to stay here and boil down sea-water for salt," suggested Fred. "That's something we've got to have."

"I'll volunteer as salt boiler for today," Roderick answered.

"I'll stay with you," said Karl. "The bay is full of fish. I want to see if I can make a trap and catch some. I've read of one I think will work."

"Good," exclaimed Dr. Cameron, "I'm glad you are putting your wits to work. Suppose then you two stay here and mind the camp, while the rest of us explore a bit in search of food and water. We'll leave a gun and an axe with you. We'll not go very far and we'll be back by noon."

After the others had gone Roderick and Karl went to work industriously. Rod first

cut a piece of giant bamboo from which he made four shallow tubs. He filled these with sea-water and placed two of them on the stone stove over a hot fire. When the water had almost boiled away he took them off the fire and set them in the sun, replacing them with full ones. The sun completed the evaporation and a small quantity of salt was found in the bottom of each tub.

"Why don't you make a lot of tubs and put them in the sun?" suggested Karl. "It will take much longer for evaporation of course, but there's plenty of sun and plenty of sea-water and plenty of bamboo, and the process may just as well be going on all the time."

"Right you are," Rod answered, "but I wish I had a saw. I could make them better and quicker."

"If wishes were fishes, I'd have one fried," mused Karl, looking critically at his fish trap, "but—what in the world is that?"

A deep, booming noise sounded from the forest. The two boys stared at each other in surprise.

"What can it be?" exclaimed Rod.

58 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

"I've no idea," Karl answered. "I thought wild animals snarled or roared or shrieked. I never heard of one that boomed like a big harsh-toned bell."

This described the sound very well. They heard it at intervals for the next half hour, and when it finally ceased they felt rather relieved.

In the meantime Karl had been working on his fish trap. He cut a single joint of bamboo, split off the skin in strips, leaving them attached at the joint end, and twisted in at regular intervals rings made from other strips. He had considerable difficulty in making these rings to his satisfaction, but after several trials, he succeeded in getting them fairly round.

At Roderick's suggestion he fastened to the end ring narrow strips pointing inward, which would not interfere with the fish when swimming into the trap, but would make it more difficult for it to get out. He now had a cone-shaped affair, rather irregular in shape, to be sure, but strong enough for the purpose, open at one end and closed at the other, with interstices on the sides between the strips large enough to let the

light and water in, but not for a fish bigger than a minnow, to get through. Tying bits of cocoanut to some pieces of string he found in his pockets, he hung this bait inside the trap.

His idea was of course that the fish, attracted by the bait, would enter the trap, but be unable to find its way out again. As he had no cord to attach to his trap, he fastened it to a long, slender bamboo. He and Rod then went to find a suitable place to set it.

They walked along the reef that ran out from the shore. The water in the bay was still, and they could see the bottom distinctly. They exclaimed with delight at the beautiful sight. Everywhere were pink and white corals, in some places resembling a tangled forest growth with branches extending in every direction, in others growing in queer, twisted stems which expanded into what seemed like rosy blossoms. There were live sponges and strange and beautiful sea growths the names of which they did not know. Shells of various shapes and brilliant colours, as if they had been polished, could be seen through the clear water.

60 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

Crabs of all sizes scuttled and sidled along, sea-anemones spread out their feelers, and hundreds of little fish, some of them silvery and shining, others of bright colours, spotted and striped with blue and red and yellow, swam in and out among corals and sea-weeds.

So beautiful and fascinating was this new world under the water that in watching it they almost forgot their purpose.

The sight of a particularly large fish, however, reminded them of what they had to do. They proceeded along the reef to the end and there placed their trap near the entrance of the bay, weighting it with a couple of stones and fastening the bamboo to a bush that overhung the water. The tide was high now, and the fish would be likely to be swimming into the bay.

After setting the trap they hurried back to the salt factory, fearing that the tubs on the fire might have boiled dry.

"What on earth is that?" said Rod, as they neared the cabin. "Over there by that pile of cocoanuts."

Karl approached cautiously, not wishing to frighten the creature away. He stopped

when the ungainly figure raised itself up in alarm.

"A big land crab," he whispered. "Keep still, and let's see what he is doing."

They stood still and watched. The great crab seized a cocoanut in his pincers and, bit by bit, tore off the husk from the end where the eyes of the nut are. Into an eye he inserted one of his sharp claws and worked out a space large enough so that he could get a hold with his nippers. Then piece by piece he snapped away the shell until a large enough opening was made. Turning around he began to extract the nut through this opening with his hind pincers, which were much smaller and narrower than the strong front ones.

"So that's the beast that steals the coconuts!" exclaimed Rod.

Either his voice or something else frightened the crab, for it dropped the nut and made off at an awkward but decidedly rapid pace towards the woods.

"That beats anything I ever saw," said Karl, as he picked up and examined the half-eaten nut. "Doesn't that just go to

62 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

prove that everything is adapted to its environment?"

"I'm not adapted to this one yet," Roderick grumbled. "Something must have bitten me last night, for I'm covered with red hot, itching spots."

"So am I," confessed Karl.

Investigation proved that the "red hot spots" were caused by tiny, almost invisible insects that evidently lurked in the sand and grass.

VII

'A MISERABLE NIGHT'

A SHOUT from the direction of the forest announced the return of the hunting party, for it was now nearly noon.

They came well loaded with spoils. Dr. Cameron and Fred each carried a number of birds, and the Doctor had also a couple of large squirrels. Dick and Harold bore bunches of little green-coloured bananas, while Bobby had wound around his neck and body a coil of what seemed to be a wiry vine of some kind.

"What beautiful pigeons," exclaimed Rod. "They look too pretty to be killed and eaten."

"It does seem a pity to shoot them," his father answered, "but they are very good eating and we are in need of food."

There were two varieties: small green birds with magenta stains on their heads and

64 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

on their white breasts, and beautiful ash-coloured ones with wings and neck shot with purple and bronze. The squirrels were also very pretty, being ringed with bands of grey, yellow and brown.

"Those bananas aren't ripe, are they?" asked Rod.

"Yes," said his father. "They are a different kind from the big, cultivated, yellow ones we get at home, but I think you will find them good eating."

Bobby's queer load was rattan, which, being both strong and flexible, would prove a useful substitute for rope and twine. It had bunches of feathery leaves at each joint, beneath which grew thorns which Bobby had trimmed off with his knife.

The hunting party had gone a little way into the woods, and had come upon several large flocks of pigeons feeding on fruits and seeds. The only ripe fruit they found that they knew to be edible for man was bananas, as it was too early in the season for most of the forest fruits. They saw no large animals, but Dick had a rather narrow escape from a tree snake when he started to climb a palm. As he neared the crown of



*The Snake Suddenly Thrust Its Ugly Head out from
Among the Leaves.*



the tree the snake suddenly thrust its ugly head out from among the leaves, and Dick descended in a hurry.

Parts of the forest were thick, and the explorers had to cut their way. In one place Bobby became so entangled in creepers that it took several minutes to release him.

While Fred and Bobby were getting dinner, Rod took his father aside and told him of the queer noise he and Karl had heard.

"I don't know what it could have been," Dr. Cameron said. "We didn't hear anything of the kind. You and Karl were right not to say anything about it before the others. There is no use frightening the younger boys."

Dinner, which consisted of pigeons broiled over the coals, bananas and cocoanuts, tasted decidedly good, and everyone did full justice to it. The salt Rod had collected was a welcome addition.

After dinner they were glad to rest, for the sun was now very hot. All had suffered during the night from the little red insects, which the Doctor said resembled the

58 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

"I've no idea," Karl answered. "I thought wild animals snarled or roared or shrieked. I never heard of one that boomed like a big harsh-toned bell."

This described the sound very well. They heard it at intervals for the next half hour, and when it finally ceased they felt rather relieved.

In the meantime Karl had been working on his fish trap. He cut a single joint of bamboo, split off the skin in strips, leaving them attached at the joint end, and twisted in at regular intervals rings made from other strips. He had considerable difficulty in making these rings to his satisfaction, but after several trials, he succeeded in getting them fairly round.

At Roderick's suggestion he fastened to the end ring narrow strips pointing inward, which would not interfere with the fish when swimming into the trap, but would make it more difficult for it to get out. He now had a cone-shaped affair, rather irregular in shape, to be sure, but strong enough for the purpose, open at one end and closed at the other, with interstices on the sides between the strips large enough to let the

light and water in, but not for a fish bigger than a minnow, to get through. Tying bits of cocoanut to some pieces of string he found in his pockets, he hung this bait inside the trap.

His idea was of course that the fish, attracted by the bait, would enter the trap, but be unable to find its way out again. As he had no cord to attach to his trap, he fastened it to a long, slender bamboo. He and Rod then went to find a suitable place to set it.

They walked along the reef that ran out from the shore. The water in the bay was still, and they could see the bottom distinctly. They exclaimed with delight at the beautiful sight. Everywhere were pink and white corals, in some places resembling a tangled forest growth with branches extending in every direction, in others growing in queer, twisted stems which expanded into what seemed like rosy blossoms. There were live sponges and strange and beautiful sea growths the names of which they did not know. Shells of various shapes and brilliant colours, as if they had been polished, could be seen through the clear water.

68 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

lessly, when he was startled wide awake by a rustling, scratching sound as if some animal was trying to climb the outside of the wall. Then he heard something running across the thatch.

An instant later Rod, who was sleeping peacefully, was suddenly struck by a snarling ball of fur, with something sharp about it that dug into his shoulder savagely. He jumped up with a cry, shaking off the intruder, which sprang towards the faint light of the doorway, brushing Dr. Cameron's face as it leaped over him. Almost at the same instant there was a shout from Fred, who was on guard.

For a few seconds confusion reigned in the camp. Dr. Cameron, who was nearest the door, was the first one out. By the flash of his electric pocket light he saw Fred trying to club a small, snarling beast with the butt end of his rifle. At the flash of light the animal took alarm, leaped to the trunk of the nearest tree, and disappeared in the darkness.

"What on earth was that thing?" cried Fred. "I thought I heard something on the roof, then somebody yelled. I started



He Jumped Up with a Cry, Shaking Off the Intruder.

towards the door and the beast landed square on my back. Who was it yelled?"

"Me," answered Rod ungrammatically. "Some sort of a furry thing with sharp claws hit me on the shoulder and woke me out of a sound sleep."

"The first thing I heard," said his father, "was Rod's yell. Then something brushed my face as it jumped towards the door. Where did it come from?"

"It fell through the roof," and Karl told what he had heard.

"If it came through the door, how did it manage to light on my back?" said Fred, puzzled. "When Rod yelled I started towards the door and then this thing landed on me and dug its claws in to hold on by. I thought it came from that tree. I shook it off and tried to hit it with my gun. Then it turned and showed fight."

"There must have been two of them," the scoutmaster concluded. "I got only a glimpse of a small, dark, white-breasted furry animal that was snarling like one of the cat tribe. I don't know what it was, unless it was some kind of a lemur. It is probably a nocturnal beast preying on birds

70 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

or animals smaller than itself. Let me see your scratches."

By the aid of the searchlight he found that Fred's coat and shirt were torn in two places, but the animal's claws had only scratched him. The wound in Rod's shoulder was deep enough to bleed. The scout-master applied an antiseptic from his medical kit for fear of poisoning from the beast's claws, and all but Karl, whose turn it was to go on guard, returned to bed, but sleep was long in coming to them. As it was impossible to build a fire Dr. Cameron gave Karl his pocket light, with instructions to flash it in any direction where he heard a suspicious sound.

VIII

REBELLION AND DISCIPLINE

THE next day was Sunday and the scoutmaster had given orders for a day of rest. Only the most necessary work was to be done. So far the boys had all proved themselves cheerful and willing at their unusual tasks, but they were human and today their tempers began to show the effect of the strenuous labours and troubles of the last few days. They had passed a restless, miserable night. They were chilled and stiff from sleeping in the wet, and they were beginning to feel the effects of an unaccustomed and not very nourishing diet.

The trouble began when Fred awoke at daylight and found Harold asleep at his post. This was a serious offence and Fred felt it incumbent upon him to maintain strict discipline. He, therefore, scolded Harold sharply, and when the latter, cross and sleepy, retorted, ordered him to go without

72 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

his breakfast. Harold accordingly flung himself down on one of the cots and refused to go down to the beach to bathe. So at Fred's command Karl and Dick seized the stubborn boy, half dragged, half carried him to the shore, stripped him and ducked him forcibly. It must be confessed that, not feeling very amiable themselves, they did this rather more roughly than was necessary.

Then Dick, who was fond of teasing the slower and more deliberate Karl, stole the latter's glasses which he had left lying on a rock while he bathed. After seeking for them for several minutes he heard Dick snicker, and, realizing that the younger boy had something to do with the mysterious disappearance, turned on him suddenly. But Dick, who was much quicker footed, fled, and refused to give up the glasses to the now irate Karl, even at Fred's orders, until Dr. Cameron was obliged to interfere.

The fish trap was raised and found to contain several edible fish. Roderick and Harold were due to get breakfast, so the others set to work to repair the roof, as

REBELLION AND DISCIPLINE 78

Dr. Cameron considered this necessary work. Rod showed the still sullen Harold how to clean the fish while he sought dry wood for the fire. When he returned he found that the lad had deserted his work after partly cleaning one fish, and was nowhere to be seen. Now Roderick was soft hearted and thought Fred had been rather too severe with Harold, so he said nothing, but cleaned the fish himself. He was frying them in pigeon fat, using a couple of aluminum plates for frying pans when Fred came to see if breakfast was nearly ready.

"Where's Harold?" he asked. "Hasn't he been helping you?"

"He did for a while," Rod answered. "I don't know where he is now, but I'm nearly through and don't need him."

"Humph," was Fred's reply.

He found Harold sound asleep in the cabin with the skins of half a dozen bananas on the ground beside him. Thoroughly put out at this breach of discipline, he seized the lad roughly by the shoulder and shook him.

"Get up and go out there and help Rod

74 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

get breakfast," he said sharply, "or you'll go without your dinner, too."

Harold, now thoroughly angry, wrenched himself from his patrol leader's grasp and struck him in the face. Then he threw himself down on the cot and began to cry. Dr. Cameron, hearing the conflict, appeared at that moment and took in the situation at a glance.

"Breakfast is ready, Fred," he said. "Leave Harold to me. I think I can straighten him out."

Fred went rather reluctantly. "I never can enforce discipline if Dr. Cameron is going to interfere," he grumbled to himself.

Breakfast was rather a dismal affair. Fred's dignity was hurt, Rod's shoulder ached, Karl was gloomily silent, Dick inclined to be quarrelsome, and little Bobby so tired and homesick that his fish and bananas almost choked him.

When Dick made some slighting remark about Harold, Rod turned on him and told him sharply to shut up and not hit another fellow when he was down. Then Dick retorted that a fellow who was scared half to death by a cat in the night needn't put

REBELLION AND DISCIPLINE 75

on airs, and there might have been another quarrel if the Doctor and Harold had not put in an appearance just at that moment. Harold muttered a shame-faced apology to Fred, then began industriously to spread the firewood in the sun to dry while the others finished their breakfast. The scoutmaster's firm but gentle methods had conquered.

After breakfast Dr. Cameron took Fred aside and advised him to be less harsh in his methods of disciplining a spoiled and homesick boy. He also told him that he did not think it wise to deprive any one of food as a punishment. He had not interfered this time, but in the future other modes of punishment must be found.

The scoutmaster then called the boys together for a short service which he concluded with a brief talk that made them feel better. Nevertheless the day was a hard one for all of them, for, although they needed the rest after the labours of the last few days and an almost sleepless night, idleness gave them more time for homesickness.

Some excitement was caused by the re-

76 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

appearance of the land crab. When the boys had told Dr. Cameron the day before about their strange visitor he had remarked that land crabs were very good eating, and had planned to catch this one if it came back. So he had made a strong noose of a creeping plant and fastened it to the end of a bamboo pole. Now, when the crab was busy with a cocoanut he approached cautiously, intending to slip the noose over its nippers, but the creature took alarm and made off before he was near enough. About an hour later, however, it returned and this time, the Doctor, by moving very quietly and concealing himself behind the tree trunks, managed to slip the loop over one of its front nippers, and giving the noose a couple of sharp turns, had the crab so tangled up that it could not escape.

He warned the boys to be careful for the crab's powerful nippers were quite strong enough to crush their fingers if it got them in its grasp. But Dick did not heed the warning and, in an attempt to turn the creature over with a stick, got his hand too close. Fortunately, the Doctor was near, and, hearing Dick's sharp cry, turned

REBELLION AND DISCIPLINE 77

quickly and stuck his pocket knife into the crab's fleshy tail, causing it to let go. Dick, however, had a badly bruised finger as a result of his lack of caution.

This robber crab, as it is also called, was an ugly looking creature with powerful claws, a large, fleshy tail and queer, protuberant eyes, which enable it to see in all directions at once and make it difficult to approach. It usually comes out at night and is not often seen in the daytime.

When roasted on the coals its bluish-grey shell turned to a bright lobster-like red, and its white, delicately flavoured flesh made the most nourishing meal the boys had had yet. The fleshy tail supplied a quantity of oil which Fred put in one of the bamboo tubs, as Dr. Cameron told him that it was not only good for oiling their guns, but also to fry fish and eggs in.

After the worst heat of the day was over they all went out on the reef to look at the wonderland under the water, and the scoutmaster explained to them how the little coral insects build up great islands, and told them the names and habits of many

78 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

of the strange and beautiful sea growths and creatures. Karl was fortunate enough to find a beautiful nautilus shell nearly six inches long which had risen to the surface after the death of the little creature that dwelt in it. The live nautilus creeps like a snail along the bed of the ocean, and it is only after its death that the shell rises and is washed ashore.

While they were sitting around the fire in the evening Dr. Cameron proposed that the next day be spent in exploring. He was not satisfied, he said, with the present location of their camp. The land was low, the reef cut off much of the sea breeze, and there was no fresh water. They had been along the coast for some distance in one direction, but only for a short way in the other. So he urged that they start as early as possible in the latter direction and make a thorough search for a stream. He had another reason for the trip that he did not mention. He believed that the interest and excitement of exploring would divert the boys' minds and help to keep them from homesickness.

The lads were delighted with the pro-

REBELLION AND DISCIPLINE 79

posal. Fred was the only one to raise an objection.

"Suppose the *Flying Fish* should come back while we are gone," he said. "Oughtn't some one to stay here?"

"I don't think that is necessary," answered the Doctor. "They would land here, of course, and see our cabin. I'll leave a note saying that we will be back by night."

Plans for the trip kept them busy until it was time to say their evening prayers and turn in. The night passed quietly with nothing more disturbing than the mosquitoes. Every waking moment the boys spent in speculation upon what adventures tomorrow would bring forth—tomorrow when they were to strike out into the jungle of this strange, unknown island. Were there wild beasts there, or quicksands, or deserts, or volcanoes, or giant snakes, or—cannibals? No wonder the thought of the exploring trip kept them awake.

IX

THE EXPLORING TRIP

THE patrol made an early start the next morning, leaving camp soon after sunrise. Crossing a low ridge, they followed the sandy beach, covered thinly here with cocoanut and other palms growing down almost to the water. Their leaves were still wet with the heavy tropical dew. Here and there the explorers startled bright-plumaged parrakeets, which rose from the trees with harsh, screaming cries. White cockatoos with yellow crests were also conspicuous among the green palms.

As they went on the growth became thicker, and among the straight, slender palms other large trees of different varieties began to appear. These increased until they formed a dense forest extending down to the shore, their boughs, clothed with creepers and orchids, overhanging the

the birds, not the flowers, were in this part of the

It was always true of tropical
Aeron answered. "There
not flowers, of course, but
ful and the lack of bright
the woods gloomy and
were not for the birds."

considerable undergrowth here
going. The ground was
ches deep with dead leaves,
do not shed their leaves
in small installments the
ones taking their places.
all and its thick covering
on the hard rains, and the
into the slippery, sticky

They were making their way
larly thick bit of under-
d a loud, booming sound
They stopped in surprise
and Rod and Karl ex-
for it was the same noise
hen left alone in camp two

82 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

a beetle might feel in an ordinary fern bed.

The tide was rising and they were soon obliged to leave the narrow stretch of sandy beach and strike through the forest.

"Look up there, father; what beautiful birds!" exclaimed Bobby.

"Those are lories," his father answered. "They belong, as you can see from their appearance, to the same class as parrots."

They paused for a few minutes to watch these handsome, red birds, with green wings and a yellow spot on the back, as they fluttered among the foliage. Parrots of green shaded into azure blue on the crown of the head and with red bills were also seen. Once they startled a flock of large, green birds with straight, bristly bills and heads and necks variegated with patches of vivid blue and crimson. These, the scoutmaster said, were barbets. They had been feeding on the half-ripe fruit of a clump of palm trees.

The boys remarked on the fact that, though many of the trees were in flower, most of the blossoms were inconspicuous ones.

"It seems to be the birds, not the flowers, that are bright-coloured in this part of the world," said Karl.

"That is almost always true of tropical forests," Dr. Cameron answered. "There are some magnificent flowers, of course, but they are not plentiful and the lack of bright colour would make the woods gloomy and monotonous if it were not for the birds."

There was considerable undergrowth here and it was hard going. The ground was covered several inches deep with dead leaves, for tropical trees do not shed their leaves all at once, but in small installments the year around, new ones taking their places. The soft clay soil and its thick covering were still wet from the hard rains, and the boys' feet sank into the slippery, sticky mass.

Suddenly, as they were making their way through a particularly thick bit of undergrowth, they heard a loud, booming sound ahead of them. They stopped in surprise and some fear, and Rod and Karl exchanged glances, for it was the same noise they had heard when left alone in camp two days before.

84 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

"It's a wild beast," exclaimed Bobby.

"Let's see if we can find out what it is," his father answered. "I think I know, but I may possibly be mistaken. I'll go ahead with my gun and Fred may come next with his."

They made their way cautiously and a little fearfully in the direction of the sound, which continued almost incessantly.

Presently the scoutmaster called back reassuringly: "It's all right, boys. Come and see your wild beasts. They won't hurt you."

Following his lead they came to a more open space in the woods, where stood a number of great palms, scattered thinly about. From these trees came the booming, roaring notes. The lads gazed in surprise, for there was nothing alive in sight except a flock of great, green pigeons feeding on the fruit of the palms.

"Fruit pigeons," exclaimed Karl. "I've read about the racket they make, but I didn't know it was as bad as that."

"You don't mean to tell me that those birds do all that roaring," said Rod.

"Watch and you'll see," laughed his

father. "I thought it was pigeons, but wasn't quite sure, so it was best to be cautious."

"But the pigeons we saw the other day didn't have such voices as these," Dick remarked.

"No, they were a different kind. These are Great Green Pigeons. I am going to see if I can shoot some of the birds for our dinner."

His shots brought down two which he placed in his knapsack and then the explorers continued on their way.

A little distance beyond they came out in sight of the ocean again. Here the trees did not grow down to the shore, but a stretch of reedy grass extended almost to the water's edge, the tide being now high. Through this grass, which was four or five feet tall, coarse, and with edges that cut like knives, they travelled for some distance, the ocean on the left hand and the forest on the right. The grass scratched and cut their hands and even the faces of the shorter members of the party. They went carefully for fear of snakes which might be lurking there. The sun was very hot and they were

86 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

wet with perspiration, but a breeze from the sea kept it from being unbearable.

Dr. Cameron, with Bobby by his side, was ahead, with Fred a few paces behind and the others a little distance in the rear, when Fred noticed a movement among the grass and scattered trees at his right. He turned and went cautiously in that direction. The grass moved and rustled as if some large animal was moving through it, but he could not get a glimpse of the creature. Presently it uttered a peculiar, grunting sound.

"A wild pig," thought Fred. "Here's a chance for some meat."

X

THE BABIRUSA

RAISING his rifle, he fired at the moving grass. Instantly the beast turned and rushed towards him.

Fred's little rifle was not a repeater and there was no time to reload. There was nothing to do but run. He made off as fast as he could, catching a glimpse as he turned of the ugly, tusked head of the animal behind him. He had run but a few paces when his foot caught and he fell full length. Before he could recover himself he heard a shot and then another in quick succession. By the time he was on his feet again, the scoutmaster was calling to him.

"It's all right. I've killed it."

The excited boys gathered around the dead animal. It was a strange looking beast, in general appearance like a hog, but with long, slender legs, and tusks projecting above the snout, the upper ones so strongly

88 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

curved back that they nearly touched the forehead.

"What a queer looking pig," said Roderick.

"It is a pig-deer or babirusa," his father answered. "It is like a pig in most respects, although it doesn't dig with its snout, but its long legs and swiftness of foot have won for it the name of deer as well. It's lucky I hit it with the first shot, for the babirusa is strong and fierce, as well as swift, and might have hurt Fred badly if it had reached him. After this don't fire until you see what you are aiming at," he added to the rather crestfallen patrol leader.

The body of the pig-deer was tied about with a strong creeper and fastened to a pole and the boys took turns, two by two, carrying it.

A little farther on they caught sight of a troop of small, jet-black monkeys in a group of palm trees. They set up a lively chatter as the party approached.

"I thought monkeys always had long tails," said Dick. "These fellows haven't any."

"They are short-tailed monkeys," an-

swered the Doctor, "a species different from the long-tailed kind you have seen. Queer-looking little fellows, aren't they?"

They were queer-looking indeed, jet-black in colour and not larger than spaniels, and more like baboons than monkeys in appearance, with their projecting, dog-like muzzles, overhanging brows and short, fleshy tails scarcely an inch long. When the party stood still some of the inquisitive little animals came so close that it was possible to get a good look at them.

As they continued the ground grew lower and more swampy. Ahead of them was a grove of beautiful palms growing quite down to the shore. The scoutmaster exclaimed with satisfaction when he saw these handsome trees.

"No danger of starving on this island, boys," he said. "These are Sago Palms."

"I've read," said Karl, gazing up at the trees with interest, "that the natives of some of these islands just about live on sago. But isn't it a good deal of a process to prepare it?"

"Yes," answered the Doctor, "but if the natives can do it with their rude appliances,

90 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

we can also. I saw them make sago when I was in this part of the world a number of years ago and I think I can remember how it is done."

"What part of the tree is it that you eat?" asked Dick. "I don't know anything about sago."

"It is made from the pith, which is pounded and washed, and dried into a sort of meal, and cakes made of it. That is the way the natives use it. It is pearled or made into little grains for exportation to Europe and America."

"Do these trees die after flowering, like the palms where we saw the pigeons?" queried Karl, noticing that some of them bore long spikes of blossoms, but that there were several that appeared to be quite brown and dead, though still standing.

"Yes," the scoutmaster answered, "flowering takes the life out of them. The sago is made from trees that have not blossomed."

"Isn't it almost noon?" said Dick, as they passed through the grove. "I'm nearly starved."

"It's a quarter to twelve," the Doctor

replied, "but we don't want to stop for lunch here. There is higher ground ahead where we can be more comfortable."

Beyond the sago grove the ground began to rise and the shore became rocky and steep. They mounted a long, gradual slope covered with shorter and finer grass and scattered trees. At some little distance to their right was the thick forest, while at their left they could hear the ocean swells breaking on the rocks. The gradual slope was broken at intervals by a few feet of steeper rise, in some places rather difficult to scramble up. Finally, after a last steep slope perhaps fifty feet long, they found themselves on a level plateau several hundred feet in extent. It was open ground except for occasional clumps of palms, principally cocoanut. This open space was bounded on the right by the forest, which also stretched across in front of them clear to the cliff's edge, a thick wall of trees and underbrush entirely cutting off their view ahead.

They were all tired and very hot, so they decided to stop here and eat, and rest for a couple of hours. They were very sure

92 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

they could go back to the bay in a much shorter time than it had taken them to come. So a fire was built and the rubber blankets spread on the ground in the shade of a clump of palms. Dick climbed up and dropped down a good supply of cocoanuts, while Fred broiled the pigeons and some slices of the pig-deer. They had brought salt with them and were hungry enough to do full justice to a hearty meal. The meat, in spite of the fact that it was rather tough and strong-flavoured, tasted especially good, it had been so long since they had had any.

"If we only had some bread and butter to go with this it wouldn't be half bad," said Dick.

"We'll have sago cakes with grated cocoanut on them one of these days," the Doctor answered.

"What I'd like is a chance to drink as much water as I want," Roderick exclaimed. "There's so little in a cocoanut. I want gallons."

"I'm disappointed that we haven't found a stream," said his father. "We may find one yet, of course, but not today, I am afraid."



*Pushing His Way Forward Through the Thick Tangle,
He Disappeared from View.*

After dinner they stretched out on the blankets to rest for a while, talking and dozing. It was very hot and all life seemed stilled. Not a bird called. The light breeze scarcely stirred the palm leaves over their heads. The monotonous beating of the ocean swells against the rocks below the cliff, and the humming of insects were the only sounds that broke the silence.

In spite of annoyance from the ants that crawled over them, Harold and Bobby, their heads pillowed on their knapsacks, were soon sound asleep. The others, talking lazily and in low tones, so as not to disturb the sleepers; found themselves also growing drowsy.

Karl, however, did not doze, neither did he join in the conversation; but, turning on his side, he stared thoughtfully at the wall of greenery ahead.

Finally he said: "Dr. Cameron, wouldn't you like to see what is beyond that wall of trees? It seems too bad to turn back without a glimpse farther on."

"Suppose we go and see whether it is just a narrow belt or deep forest," answered the scoutmaster, struck by some suggestion in Karl's tone.

94 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

"I'm going, too," cried Dick, always ready for adventure. The others decided to remain where they were.

The undergrowth was very dense and the explorers found it necessary to cut their way. Indeed, so thick was the growth that, after advancing a few feet, the Doctor concluded that it was too hard going to waste their strength on. Karl was in advance with the axe; the scoutmaster had just opened his mouth to call him back when the boy, who was pushing his way forward through a thick tangle, suddenly gave a little cry and disappeared from view.

XI

ROCKY RIVER

AS Dr. Cameron sprang forward he heard a cry from Dick, a little distance to the left. Reaching the place where Karl had vanished he saw a surprising sight, and at the same time just saved himself from sliding down a steep precipice.

He stood on the edge of a deep ravine. At the bottom, through ferns and bushes water gleamed. Part way down at his left was Dick, one foot resting on a narrow ledge and both hands grasping a stout vine. Karl was nowhere to be seen.

"Don't bother about me," called Dick. "I can climb up. Karl's gone to the bottom."

Turning back, the scoutmaster shouted to the others to come and help Dick, warning them to be careful or they would go over the bank. Then he looked about for a way to descend in search of Karl.

96 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

The rocky slope was too steep for trees, but was partly clothed with shrubs, creeping plants and vines. The Doctor had climbed mountains and a steep bank had no terrors for him. Holding on by vines and shrubs and taking advantage of every little ledge and knob he worked his way carefully down.

Reaching the bottom he looked about anxiously. There was no sign of Karl, and the Doctor shouted:

“Karl—Kar-rl!”

The name rang out, echoing through the ravine. Every boy stood very still, not even breaking a twig, and with bated breath listened eagerly for an answer. None came. With a heart full of anxiety the Doctor began searching through the trees and shrubs that edged the stream. Finally he caught a glimpse of khaki behind a great fern, and, pushing it aside, found the missing boy, white and still, lying on his back close to a big rock over which he had shot in his fall.

Dr. Cameron knelt down and felt the boy's heart. It was still beating, and there were no outward signs of serious injury.

Hastening to the stream he filled his hat with water and dashed it in the unconscious lad's face. He had to do this a second time before Karl opened his eyes.

"What happened—I fell——" he said weakly.

"You fell down a steep bank. Are you hurt?"

"I—don't know. Is there a stream there? I thought there might be, beyond the trees."

"There is," answered the Doctor, "and we owe the finding of it to you. Let me help you up."

Karl's left leg was twisted under him, and when he tried to move it he uttered a groan.

"Where does it hurt?" asked the scout-master.

"My knee—and my head aches awfully."

"You must have struck your head. Ah, that's the place, is it?" as Karl cried out when the Doctor touched a lump on the side of his head. "Now, let's see about the knee."

The knee was dislocated and had to be pulled back into place. This caused the lad to faint again, but a dash of water

98 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

revived him. His glasses had been knocked off in the fall, but were found unbroken, resting on a fern.

"I wonder I didn't break myself all to pieces," he said when Dr. Cameron had helped him to stand, as he looked up the steep slope down which he had fallen. "I guess I would have been badly smashed if I hadn't landed in that bed of ferns."

A shout from the top of the bank showed that the boys had caught sight of them.

"See if you can find a better place to come down, boys," called the scoutmaster, "but be careful. Karl has hurt his knee, and we'll have to find some way to get him up."

About a hundred feet farther down the ravine the boys found a place where they could descend without much difficulty. They were eager to taste the water of the little stream, and would have drunk more than they should if the Doctor had not stopped them. They bathed their heads, faces and arms, revelling in the fresh, fairly cool water.

The stream, which Harold christened "Rocky River," was some twenty feet wide

and about five feet deep in the deepest places. It was swift flowing and perfectly clear, so that the bottom, rocky in some places, and covered with sand and pebbles in others, could be plainly seen. The water was without taint of salt. The opposite slope seemed to be nearly as precipitous as the one they had come down, but so covered with vines and creepers as to be almost a solid bank of green.

With Rod helping him on one side and the Doctor on the other, Karl reached the place of ascent very comfortably, but getting up the bank was another matter. He set his teeth and persisted, however, and, pushed, pulled and supported by the others, finally reached the top.

"I don't quite see how I'm going to get back to camp with this blamed knee," he said, after they had made their way through the thicket to the open ground. "You fellows can't ever carry me all that distance. Maybe I can walk it with somebody to help me. I'm willing to try, but it will be awfully slow work. I don't believe I can ever make it before night."

"Getting back to the bay tonight is out

100 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

of the question," said the scoutmaster. "It is after 8:30 now and even if Karl could do it at all we couldn't possibly make it before dark. Besides it would be foolish and dangerous for him to try. We'll have to camp here."

As there was not time to build a cabin Dick suggested that they make a tepee. With a liana and two pegs for a compass he marked off a circle, while the Doctor and Fred cut fifteen long, slender bamboos as near the same size as possible. Three of these were first set up tripod fashion, cutting the circle into equal segments, and bound together about eighteen inches from the top with rattan from the thicket. The rest of the poles were then fastened on in the same way and the frame was complete.

Dick then climbed a palm tree and cut off leaves which were tied on to form the covering, a few holes being left for ventilation. Remembering the night attack recently experienced, and not knowing what might lurk in the thick woods, the boys drove a circle of stakes around their tepee, to which they fastened cross pieces to form a rude fence. Against this they heaped,

thorns outward, quantities of a thorny bush that grew plentifully along the ravine edge, making a really formidable defence.

This work was done by the scoutmaster, Fred and the three younger boys, for Karl was unable to do anything; and Roderick was busy making an oven in which to roast the babirusa meat, as it would not keep long uncooked in this warm climate. He dug a hole, a slow task, as his only tools were a scoop of split bamboo, an aluminum cup and plate, and a large jackknife. This hole he lined with flat slabs of rock that he found on the beach at the bottom of the cliff, cementing them together with clay.

He then built a hot fire inside, and when it burned down to coals and ashes and the rocky walls were thoroughly heated, he filled the oven with babirusa meat with a layer of leaves between it and the coals. In the meantime he had thoroughly heated a large slab with which he now covered the hole, scattering a thin layer of dirt above it to keep in the heat. The fire used for cooking supper was made directly over this oven and later the watch fire was built in the same spot.

102 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

While Rod was searching for stones for his oven he made an interesting discovery, a beautiful little waterfall where the stream fell over the rocks on its way to the ocean. The height of this fall accounted for the fact that there was no backset of salt water into the stream even at high tide. The plateau Rod estimated to be fully one hundred and fifty feet up from the beach, which was narrow here and evidently covered several feet deep at high tide.

Supper consisted of babirusa meat boiled in a bamboo kettle, cocoanuts, bamboo shoots and plenty of fresh water. After supper the patrol held a council and decided to abandon their former camp and establish one here. There were several reasons for this decision, the most important being plenty of fresh water. Then, too, Dr. Cameron thought the higher ground more healthful and it was certainly cooler, as the sea breezes had a better opportunity to reach them. They decided to leave the cabin standing at Coral Bay, as they had named it, and place a message for Captain Morton in plain sight.

At first Karl insisted upon doing his share

of guard duty, but the scoutmaster overruled him. He thought that the lad's injuries entitled him to an unbroken night's rest. Accordingly Rod and Dick volunteered to divide his watch between them.

Unfortunately none of the boys passed a very restful night. Their quarters were cramped and the ants and other insects that crawled over them were annoying. There were not many mosquitoes, but some of the ants bit sharply, and the same "bêtes rouges," which had tormented them at Coral Bay, were plentiful here also.

For these reasons the lads were not sorry when daybreak came. A good bath in the fresh water of the stream soon relieved the itching of the insect bites, and they were ready for breakfast and a good day's work.

XII

HOUSE BUILDING

THE next three days were busy ones for the scouts on their lonely island.

The patrol decided to build a better and more comfortable house than the one at the bay.

To keep out snakes and insects they imitated the natives of that part of the world and raised the floor of their dwelling about four feet above the ground. Across beams lashed firmly to stout posts, split bamboos were laid for flooring. The walls were also of split bamboo, placed vertically this time, and fastened to three horizontal canes, one a few inches above the floor, another at the top of the walls and a third halfway between. Lianas and cocoanut fibre were used for tying and in some places bamboo pegs were substituted for nails.

The floor was made to project beyond the walls about six feet in front and four

at the sides and back to form a porch. A ridge pole was set up and a properly pitched roof of bamboo and palm leaves built to project over the porch as a protection from sun and rain.

A door was left in the end towards the sea and a window at the rear and on each side. Lattices of narrow strips of bamboo were placed in the windows to keep out wild beasts, while another movable lattice could be set up in the doorway. A ladder that could be pulled up at night was necessary to enter the dwelling.

Ants of several different kinds, varying in size from red ones so small the boys could scarcely see them, to black ones nearly an inch long, were abundant and annoying. The boys soon discovered that some kinds bit very sharply. Rod attempted to keep them out of the house by smearing cocoanut oil, made by boiling the nut meats and skimming off the oil that rose to the surface, on the posts and the lower part of the ladder. This did not prove a sufficient protection, but he finally hit upon a plan that served to keep out the troublesome insects very effectually.

106 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

He made some shallow bamboo tubs and cut them in half vertically. He then cut out a semicircular hole in the bottom of each half so that two half tubs just fitted around the base of each post. After chinking them around the posts to make them water-tight he filled these little tubs with oil through which the ants could not pass.

Heaps of ferns were spread on the springy bamboo floor and covered with palm leaves for beds and the house was complete.

Karl, with his lame knee, was unable to take a very active part in the house building, but he kept busy. He cut the pegs used in the construction, made a number of bamboo tubs and dishes of various sizes for cooking and provisions, distilled salt from the sea water, built a fireplace, for which the other boys gathered the stones, did much of the cooking and finally made several bows and a number of arrows, for their supply of ammunition was small.

His arrows he made of slender bamboos, the sharpened points hardened in the fire and the shafts feathered with pigeon feath-

ers. He had nothing for bow-strings, but Fred suggested that the cord they had used in building their first shanty would be available. As it had been found more economical not to cut the twine after each knot, it was in pieces long enough to be serviceable for bow-strings and fish lines. Accordingly it was agreed that whoever returned to Coral Bay to leave a message for Captain Morton should bring back the cord. Karl also made another fish trap which was set close to a reef running out from the shore beyond the creek.

His knee improved rapidly and he was soon getting about with the aid of a stout bamboo cane. Indeed so anxious was he to do his share of the work and not shirk that Dr. Cameron had difficulty in restraining him from overdoing.

The only one of the boys who was inclined to look upon the work as a hardship was Harold, and with him the scout-master had much patience, realizing that he was utterly unused to physical labour and that it was especially hard for him in this warm climate.

Both Fred and Dick were inclined to

108 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

regard Harold as a shirker, and to be hard on him. Fred felt the responsibility, and also, it must be confessed, the importance, of his position as patrol leader. In his eagerness to enforce discipline he was apt to be hard on the others, especially the younger boys. His pride rather resented the scoutmaster's interference with his rules, and the Doctor had to use diplomacy to prevent rebellion sometimes, in spite of the fact that the others all liked Fred.

With his own sons Dr. Cameron had little difficulty for he understood them and they were used to obeying him, not through fear, but through love and respect for their father who was their best friend and companion. The only trouble with Bobby was that the little fellow's pluck and ambition were almost too big for his body. He had an especially strong admiration for Dick, and his father had to keep an eye on him to prevent his imitating that adventurous lad's fearlessness. The latter's recklessness was an almost continual source of anxiety to the scoutmaster, for Dick was constantly in scrapes of some kind, and small accidents were always happening to him with-

out apparently making him any wiser or more cautious.

House building had to be interrupted to provide food, and Fred also decreed a general washday. As they had no changes of clothes the boys had to wear part of their wardrobe while washing and drying the rest, but in this warm climate that was no hardship. The stream was the wash-tub and, as there was no soap, they were obliged to rub their clothes with sand as a substitute. The Doctor and Fred also issued a general order that everything about camp must be kept neat and clean, that rubbish must not be left lying around but carefully burned or buried.

When Roderick's oven was opened the first morning the babirusa meat was found fairly well roasted and still hot. The better cooked parts were eaten, the oven reheated and the rest put in for more roasting. In addition to this meat, pigeons were plentiful in the palms at the edge of the forest. Karl's fish-trap yielded some fish, while small, silvery, fresh-water fish of good flavour were found in the stream. These were caught by means of a line composed

110 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

of small pieces of string, collected from various members of the party and tied together, and a hook made of a bent pin. Cocoanuts, bananas and bamboo shoots were plentiful, and Fred shot several large squirrels which were a welcome addition to the larder. On account of the destructiveness of the ants all the food had to be kept in the house.

Thursday night, the house having been completed, the boys sat around on the little porch and talked about what they should do next. It was a week that morning since they had first landed on the island, but, although the time had passed rapidly, it seemed much longer when they looked back over it, so many experiences had been crowded into a short space of time.

"I think," said Dr. Cameron, "that some of us should return to Coral Bay tomorrow and leave another message there for Captain Morton. Of course if he landed and did not find us there he would search for us, but a message would save him both time and trouble."

So it was agreed that the Doctor and Roderick should return to the bay next day.

Dick wanted to go, but the scoutmaster had to deny him the privilege as a punishment for an act of disobedience. He had gone a considerable distance into the forest alone that day, which was strictly against camp rules.

The sun was just coming up next morning when Dr. Cameron and Rod left camp. Leaves and grass were glistening with dew. Everywhere birds were calling among the trees, their cries for the most part harsh or sharp, for few tropical birds have melodious voices. When they reached the place where the babirusa was killed they were surprised to find the grass uprooted and the ground fairly ploughed up.

"It looks as if a whole drove of pigs had been rooting here," said Rod.

"That is probably just what has happened," answered his father. "A herd of wild pigs has been feeding here unless I am much mistaken, real wild pigs, for babirusas don't root. We ought to be able to get a new supply of fresh meat before long."

They did not catch a glimpse of pigs, however, or of any other animals except the little short-tailed monkeys, during the whole

112 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

trip back. They saw several birds they had not seen before, among them a racquet-tailed kingfisher, with deep purple wings and back, shoulders, head and neck of azure blue, and a tail with two long middle feathers ending in a racquet-shaped expansion of blue and white. This bird, Dr. Cameron said, ought to be called a "king hunter," as it lives, not on fish, but on insects, snails and small land crabs. They watched it fly down and pick up an insect with the same swift, darting motion the true kingfisher displays when fishing. A little farther on they came upon a large flock of little, metallic-green starlings feeding on the fruit of a palm tree. Dr. Cameron knew the names and habits of nearly every wild thing they met.

They reached the bay without mishap, but were surprised to find the thatch of their cabin pulled apart and broken in many places.

"Some more of the same beasts that visited us in the night have been here," said Rod, examining the tracks around the cabin. "I'd like to get a good look at one of them, but I'd just as soon not feel him

again. There are scars on my shoulder yet."

The fish-trap was raised and found to be full of fish, some of which were broiled for lunch. After the meal the Doctor and Rod partly dismantled the cabin to get the cord they had used in building it. They rested through the worst heat of the day, and then, after fastening a message, written on a leaf of Dr. Cameron's note-book, in a forked stick in front of what was left of the shanty, started on the return trip.

XIII

A SERIOUS MISHAP

IN the meanwhile Fred, who was in charge of the camp, kept the other boys busy. After breakfast had been cleared away he set them to building a bamboo table for the cabin. It was not a model of beauty when done, but fairly strong and serviceable, and that was all that could be expected of amateur carpenters with almost no tools. Harold and Dick were rather inclined to grumble over this extra work, as they thought that after all they had done in the last three days they were entitled to a vacation, but Fred kept them at it in spite of complaints.

After dinner they rested on the porch of the cabin, Harold and Bobby both falling sound asleep. About half-past three Fred told Karl to look after things while he went

for a short walk along the beach. Karl took out his pocket knife and went to work on a bamboo flute that he had been wanting to make for several days. Presently Dick, who had grown restless, aroused Bobby and proposed that they go down to the beach to look for shells.

"Don't go far away," said Karl, "and don't get Bob into mischief, Dick."

"You're not scoutmaster or patrol leader either," retorted Dick, who was feeling rather cross because he had missed the trip with the Doctor and Rod. "You've no business giving orders, old Spectacles."

Karl flushed. He hated the nickname Dick had given him, for he was sensitive about his near-sightedness, and would gladly have exchanged all the beauty of his soft brown eyes for the keen vision of Dick's commonplace grey ones. So he merely turned his back on the younger boy and paid no further attention to him. This manner of retorting made Dick feel rather ashamed of himself. He would not admit it, however, but, swinging around on one heel, started towards the cliff.

116 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

"Come on, Bob," he called, and Bobby followed him.

They paused for a moment at the edge of the cliff to watch a great frigate bird wheeling about overhead and swooping down from time to time with its swift, graceful flight into the sea after food, then scrambled down to the beach. Dick soon tired of picking up shells.

"Let's go over to the other side of Rocky River," he said. "We haven't been along the shore there."

"All right," Bobby answered, turning towards the cliff, for the stepping stones where they could cross the stream were some distance up the glen.

"It's too far around that way," objected Dick. "Let's see if we can't cross below the falls."

"It's awfully deep there. I don't believe we can." Nevertheless Bobby followed Dick along the beach.

At the foot of the falls where the little stream plunged over the rocks on its way to the sea the falling water had worn a deep hole in the sand and limestone, so that the stream there was very much deeper than

it was farther up, and none of the boys had ever attempted to cross there. Almost in the middle of this deep pool a flat rock rose about a foot above the water at low tide. This was enough for Dick.

"We can jump to that rock," he said, "and then to the other shore." And without waiting for Bobby's reply he took the leap, landing safely on the rock.

"Here's the place to get a good look at the falls," he cried. Then he made his second jump, landing on the sandy bank on the farther side.

"Come on, Bob," he called back to the younger boy, who stood hesitating at the water's edge. "It isn't a hard jump. You can make it all right. Don't be a coward."

These last words stung Bobby. Without waiting to get a good start, he jumped. His foot grazed the edge of the slippery rock, and down he went.

Throwing out his arms he tried to grasp it, but missed, and the water closed over his head.


He rose and tried to strike out for the shore, but a curious under-current pulled

118 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

his feet towards the falls, while the descending waters beat him down. Again he disappeared.

For an instant when he saw Bobby just graze the rock and go down, Dick was paralyzed with fright, fright such as he had never felt for himself. Then with only one idea in his mind, that he must save Bobby, he leaped back to the rock, landing on it just as the little fellow went under for the second time. Coming up, struggling and gasping, Bobby caught sight of Dick and tried to reach the rock. Dick dropped on his knees and stretched out his arms, but the force of falling water once more drove Bobby under.

In desperation Dick threw himself forward into the water, trying to hold to the slippery rock by his feet and legs. This he succeeded in doing for a moment until he had seized Bobby, but the pull and push of the water were too much for him and he lost hold and went in. Grasping Bobby with his left arm, he tried to keep them both up and reach the shore. It was only a few feet but the force of the water and Bobby's weight made the struggle seem





Dick Dropped on His Knees and Stretched out His Arms, but the Force of Falling Water Once More Drove Bobby Under.

almost a hopeless one. Instinctively, however, Dick turned down stream, and, instead of trying to go straight across, struck out at an angle. He was unusually strong for his age and a good swimmer. The younger boy was still able to make some effort, so he was not entirely a dead weight. Although they both went under once more, they managed, after what seemed to be a long, long time, but was probably not more than two minutes, to reach the shore.

Both dropped exhausted on the sand. Bobby, though tired out, had not lost consciousness, but he had swallowed a great deal of water, which was salty there, and it made him very sick for a while. It was nearly a half hour before both had recovered enough to start for camp.

In the meantime Fred, having returned to the cabin and learned from Karl that Dick and Bobby had been gone nearly an hour, started out "to see what they are up to," as he said.

Before he was halfway to the cliff, however, two bare heads appeared above it, and soon Fred was gazing in surprise at two sorry looking figures, with wet clothes, half

almost a hopeless one. Instinctively, however, Dick turned down stream, and, instead of trying to go straight across, struck out at an angle. He was unusually strong for his age and a good swimmer. The younger boy was still able to make some effort, so he was not entirely a dead weight. Although they both went under once more, they managed, after what seemed to be a long, long time, but was probably not more than two minutes, to reach the shore.

Both dropped exhausted on the sand. Bobby, though tired out, had not lost consciousness, but he had swallowed a great deal of water, which was salty there, and it made him very sick for a while. It was nearly a half hour before both had recovered enough to start for camp.

In the meantime Fred, having returned to the cabin and learned from Karl that Dick and Bobby had been gone nearly an hour, started out "to see what they are up to," as he said.

Before he was halfway to the cliff, however, two bare heads appeared above it, and soon Fred was gazing in surprise at two sorry looking figures, with wet clothes, half

120 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

dried by the sun, wrinkled and covered with sand.

"What have you two been trying to do, drown yourselves?" he cried. "Don't you know better than to go bare-headed in this blazing sun?"

Before he could ask more questions, Dick stepped forward and plunged into the tale, manfully taking all the blame to himself, though Bobby interrupted to protest that he ought to have known better than to have tried the jump. Fred's face turned white at the story, but he said only, "You had better tell that to Dr. Cameron when he comes back. Only don't let me catch either of you going more than twenty feet away from the house until he does come." And he turned and walked away, feeling that more than half the blame rested on his own shoulders for having left camp even for an hour while he was in charge.

Supper was prepared and sunset came, but the rest of the party did not return. By the time the boys had eaten, darkness had fallen, and still no sign of the Doctor and Rod. An hour passed and the lads began to be worried. Fred built up a big



Fred Built up a Big Fire with the Vague Idea that It Might Serve as a Beacon.

fire, with a vague idea that it might serve as a beacon to the returning party, though his commonsense told him that if they were lost in the thick forest they could not see any fire built here.

XIV

CRAB HUNTING. SAGO MAKING. A DROVE OF PIGS

“WHAT kept you so long?” demanded Fred. “We’ve been awfully worried about you.”

“We came back another way,” answered Dr. Cameron, “and it took us longer than we expected.”

The scoutmaster and Rod were eating their fish and bananas—and eating heartily, for they had arrived at camp “nearly starved”—and telling, between bites, about their experiences on the journey to and from the abandoned cabin on Coral Bay. The Doctor said that when they reached the place where they had been obliged to leave the shore and strike through the woods on their first trip, they found that, the tide being low, they could continue along the shore instead. Thinking that the easier going along the sands would more than

make up for the increased distance they decided to keep on along the shore.

They had not calculated, however, on a point that ran out a considerable distance into the ocean with an abrupt wall of rock that they could not climb, but had to go around on the beach at its base. On the other side of this point they came to a marsh and were obliged to make another *détour*. Here, however, the Doctor was fortunate enough to shoot a half a dozen wild ducks, four of which they managed to get by wading for them. Dr. Cameron did not have his flashlight, so when darkness fell they lighted torches, both to light the way and to keep off any wild animals that might be in the vicinity.

"We had to go slower, though, after it grew dark, especially until we struck country that we knew," concluded the Doctor.

While eating, the scoutmaster noticed that Dick and Bobby were unnaturally quiet. So he was not surprised when the former said to him seriously, "Dr. Cameron, may I speak to you a moment."

"I've something to say, too," put in Bobby.

124 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

The scoutmaster glanced from one to the other. Something, he saw plainly, had gone wrong.

"Come with me," he said, "and I'll hear what you have to say."

The three walked down to the edge of the cliff in the moonlight, and it was more than half an hour before they returned. The boys went to bed at once. The Doctor then had a short talk with Fred, who blamed himself for what had happened.

When Fred had crossed the stream in his walk he had discovered a curious stretch of beach, where the sand, instead of being white, was black. Here he found a number of crab tracks and under the tree roots back from the beach some holes that he believed to be lairs. Accordingly Dr. Cameron decided to go crab hunting before dawn the next day, the best time to catch land crabs being when they are on their way back to their holes from their nightly visits to the sea.

Before daylight the next day the Doctor and Fred went crab hunting. With the aid of the pocket flashlight they found their way across the stream and the high land be-

yond to the beach where Fred had seen the tracks. A kind of luminous fungus growing on decayed tree trunks and branches in the glen glowed brightly through the darkness with ghostly effect.

The beach where Fred had found the tracks was very steep and the coarse, loose, black sand or gravel was tiresome to walk on. The Doctor thought that this sand must be volcanic. At some time, perhaps centuries before, he said, the central part of the island, now scarcely more than a high hill, had been an active volcano, from which a lava stream had descended to the sea.

With a noose attached to a long pole they stationed themselves near a crab's lair. Presently through the dim light of dawn they saw the unwieldy forms of several crabs coming up from the sea. The Doctor let the lower end of the noose rest on the ground in front of the hole, bracing the bamboo pole against the tree so as to hold it absolutely still, as the slightest movement of the cord might alarm his prey. The crab approached close to the noose, then paused and waved its nippers about as if hesitating to proceed, but, finding everything quiet,

126 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

went forward again. The Doctor waited until its front nippers were through the noose, then suddenly with a couple of sharp turns of the cord had the creature so entangled that it could not get away.

Just at that moment the sun, a ball of fire, sprang upward from the sea, for sunrise is sudden in the tropics. When they made their way back with their prize the whole world, which had been sleeping so soundly but a short time ago, was awake, the wood pigeons calling, parakeets and cockatoos screaming as they flew shoreward from the forest, and sea gulls crying as they wheeled over the ocean.

Rod and Harold had breakfast ready and had built a fire in the stone oven to roast the ducks Dr. Cameron had brought the night before. After breakfast Fred and Bobby set to work to dress the ducks and parboil them before putting them in the hot oven to roast, while the others started for the sago grove. Sago making was to begin today.

The sago palms they found to be scarcely so tall, even when full grown, as cocoanut palms, but with thicker, larger trunks, and

with immense leaves which in the younger trees completely covered the trunk. Some of the trees were in flower, bearing great terminal spikes of blossoms. Dr. Cameron selected a full grown tree that had not flowered and he and Roderick cut it down. They then cleared away the leaves and leaf stalks and took a broad strip of bark from the upper side of the trunk. This exposed the pith, which was of a rusty colour near the bottom of the tree, but higher up pure white with woody fibres running through it.

The scoutmaster then set the boys to digging out this pith and breaking it up into coarse powder by means of clubs of heavy wood and their knives. While they were busy with this work he selected some of the large bases of the leaves which formed sheaths around the trunk of the tree. With these he intended to build a trough in which to wash the sago. As there was no fresh water here this work had to be done on the shore of Rocky River. A strainer, made from the fibrous covering of the leaf stalks of a young cocoanut tree, was placed at the end of the first trough, with another

128 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

trough beyond it for the water charged with sago to run into. The whole apparatus was supported on crossed bamboos.

The pith was carried from the grove to the stream in bamboo buckets. Here Rod, the ingenious, distinguished himself by making a shoulder yoke of bamboo by means of which he could carry two big buckets of pith very comfortably. He also conceived the idea of letting them down the steep bank of the glen with lianas.

The pith was placed in the trough and water poured on it. Then it was thoroughly kneaded and pressed against the strainer, the starchy water running through, while the fibrous refuse remained to be taken out and thrown away. The second trough had a depression in the centre where the sediment was deposited, the surplus water trickling off through a shallow outlet.

By night they had obtained a considerable quantity of the starch which was not pure white, but had a slight reddish tinge. Some of this was boiled for supper, forming a thick, sticky mass. In spite of its rather puckery taste it was relished by the

boys, who had had nothing but fish, meat, eggs and fruit for so long.

That night they witnessed a beautiful sight. The sea, which was heaving gently, without much breeze, was, for some reason that they did not understand, phosphorescent, the swells gleaming and glowing with liquid light. So strangely beautiful was this glowing sea with the dark sky above that the whole party felt a sense of awe that was almost fear as they watched it from the edge of the cliff.

The nights had passed so quietly and their new house seemed so secure that they decided it was not necessary to mount guard, and all turned in early, tired from a hard day's work.

Towards morning, however, they were awakened by the rushing and trampling of a herd of wild animals, accompanied by a grunting that at once made them conclude that a drove of wild pigs had surrounded them. In a minute the pigs were all about the house, even under it, grunting and squealing and rushing about at a great rate.

The Doctor and Fred at once seized their

130 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

guns and rushed out on the porch. The rather faint light of the sinking, haze-covered moon showed them a large herd of pigs rooting energetically around their dwelling. They both fired, taking as careful aim as they could in the dim light. A great squealing indicated that a hit had been made and the drove took fright, making away as fast as they could with a great racket.

Fred, however, distinguished one shape that moved slowly, squealing piteously, and sent after it another shot that stopped it. The rest of the herd were now out of range. Fred found that he had been fortunate enough to kill his pig, a young one not quite grown. He and Dick put the carcass on the porch to keep the ants away from it, and all rejoiced at this unexpected supply of fresh meat.

XV

SAGO CAKES AND SUGAR

ON rising the next morning the boys found that the pigs had trampled the grass and upset everything that happened to be outside the house, even knocking down the fireplace, but there was nothing they could destroy as all the food was inside the cabin. As much of the new supply of pork as the oven would hold was put in to roast. The rest was packed in bamboo tubs, covered with palm leaves, and placed on some rocks in a shady place in the stream to keep cool.

This was Sunday, so the process of sago making was suspended. Part of what had been made, however, was spread in the sun to dry. It was placed in a trough made of a split giant bamboo and raised on crossed sticks set in small dishes of crab oil to keep the ants from swarming over it.

The wind had come up in the night and

182 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

the beach was strewn with shells, fragments of coral and seaweed. So after the noon rest the boys spent their time gathering and examining them. They found several helmet shells, as the Doctor called them, of the kind that are used in making shell cameos.

"Like the one Mother has?" asked Bobby.

The name "Mother" cast a sudden gloom over the party, causing pangs of homesickness in everyone but Dick, who was an orphan and could not remember his mother.

The next day sago making was resumed, and by Tuesday night all the pith had been made into starch, leaving an outer skin not more than half an inch thick. The Doctor made a small clay oven with half a dozen slits side by side, each about three-fourths of an inch wide and six inches square. The sago which had been dried in the sun was powdered and sifted through a strainer made from the base of a leaf stalk of a young cocoanut tree. Then the oven was heated over coals, lightly filled with the powder and the opening covered with flat pieces of bark. In about five minutes the

SAGO CAKES AND SUGAR 138

cakes were baked and eagerly eaten by the lads who pronounced them fine.

"Something like corn cakes," Dick said.

"But different," Fred added, for their flavour was really not quite like anything else the boys had ever eaten.

The fresh baked cakes were soft, but Dr. Cameron said that if they were dried in the sun they would keep for years, and could be dipped in water and toasted or soaked and boiled. The boys thought them especially good when covered with grated cocoanut and found them a welcome addition to every meal, taking the place of the bread they had missed so sorely.

The raw sago was made into cylinders, covered with palm leaves and placed in one corner of the house. In this shape it would keep for a long time, and could be broken up, dried and powdered at any time.

"These sago cakes would be fine if they were sweetened a little," said Rod at breakfast next morning.

"Doesn't sugar cane ever grow wild?" asked Bobby.

"Yes," answered his father, "but I haven't seen any on this island. I don't

184 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

know whether it is found in this part of the world or not."

"What do the natives of these islands do for sweetening then?" asked Karl.

"Wild honey is frequently found, and I believe the sap of certain palm trees is sometimes boiled down for sugar. Now I come to think of it I believe they make sugar from the borassus palm, the same tree our thatch came from."

"Let's try it," said Roderick.

Accordingly they tapped several borassus palms, driving in little pieces of bamboo for the sap to run through and hanging buckets under them.

The small quantity of ammunition that the Doctor and Fred had brought ashore was almost gone, so it was necessary to practice with the bows Karl had made. Bobby was the only one who had used bow and arrows to any extent, and the others were rather surprised to find that he was easily the best shot, although the older boys' stronger arms could send a shaft farther. The length, weight and feathering of the arrows had to be experimented with to get them just right. The boys enjoyed prac-

tising with the new weapons and spent their spare time shooting at everything they could find, from the cocoanuts on the trees to the sea birds along the shore.

Karl had been trying for several days to make a bamboo flute. Coming of a music-loving family he had been taught music from his earliest childhood, and played the violin well and the flute a little. He had spoiled a number of bamboos in his attempts to get a good tone and range of notes, and, today, sitting in the shade of the porch after dinner, he resumed his efforts. Looking up presently he found Dick also working away with his pocket-knife at a slender piece of bamboo.

"Hello, Dick," he said, "making a flute too. Better make a clarinet and we'll play duets."

"I'd be a fine success at playing one of those things," answered Dick. "A mouth-organ's the best I can do, and I'm sure not a genius at that."

"What are you up to then?" queried Karl. But Dick, without reply, dropped down from the porch and went off, bamboo in hand.

186 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

About a half an hour later Karl was startled by something hitting him sharply between the shoulders. He looked around quickly when another shot struck him stinging in the side of the head, causing him to utter a howl of surprise and pain. He jumped up and, as he did so, another missile hit his leg and fell to the floor. His curiosity getting the better of his fear, he stooped and picked it up, a small pellet of clay. Just then a familiar laugh sounded close by.

"That rascal of a Dick," muttered Karl, and, jumping to the ground, he started in pursuit. But Dick was a better runner and the day was hot, so Karl soon gave up the chase and returned to his flute, the problem of which he had almost solved, he thought. After a while Dick sauntered up to the house.

"How do you like my invention?" he inquired, grinning.

"About what I should expect from a small boy like you," was the disdainful answer.

"Wait till you see what I'm going to do with it," was Dick's reply. "Bet I can

SAGO CAKES AND SUGAR 137

shoot more pigeons and things with a blow pipe than you can with bow and arrows," for Karl, because of his near-sightedness was the poorest shot in the patrol, while Dick had an unusually true and accurate eye and was an excellent judge of distance. On the other hand Karl was the most observing of all the boys, noticing and remembering everything that came within his range of vision. His natural gifts of observation and memory had been cultivated through his fondness for nature and scientific studies, while Dick was too careless to notice things about him very closely unless it was something that aroused his interest particularly.

The sugar sap was collected before dark and boiled down. It left a small quantity of sugar with some of which Rod sweetened the sago cakes for breakfast the next morning.

"I propose," said the scoutmaster after supper, "that tomorrow we cross the stream and continue exploring along the coast. I'm curious to know how big the island is, and whether we have been halfway around or not, and what's on the other side."

XVI

AROUND THE ISLAND

EARLY the next morning the whole party crossed the stream and descended the rocks to the beach. The boys had filled bamboo quivers with arrows and fastened them across their backs with rattans. They had also been careful to fill their water bottles. Crossing the black gravel beach, they disturbed a flock of tern and several sandpipers. Beyond this stretch of beach a wall of rock ran out almost to the water, but as the tide was not yet at its highest point there still remained a strip of sand at the base of the rocks wide enough for them to pass.

They passed through a grove of the queerest looking trees the boys had ever seen—trees of the most fantastic shapes.

“They are screw pines,” said the scout-master, in answer to the boys’ questions,

“but are really not pines at all, but a species of palm.” And then Karl was the first to see a Spectacled Fly-Catcher, a black and white bird with a broad ring of blue around each eye which did look like spectacles.

The beach grew narrower as they proceeded and the rocky cliffs higher and steeper, until presently there ceased to be any beach at all, and they had to climb the rocks. The bank here was not very steep and was clothed with ferns, shrubs and creepers. The boys picked their way carefully, for the shrubbery concealed holes and clefts into which their feet sometimes slipped when they thought they were putting them down on firm rock. They had an uncomfortable feeling too that this was a likely place for snake holes and kept a close lookout for them. When they had almost reached the top Harold stepped on a mass of creepers and went through up to his waist in a crevice. He was not hurt, however, only jarred and startled, and Rod soon pulled him out.

They continued along the top of the cliff among palms. The rocks grew more precipitous, and, as there was no reef to protect

140 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

them here, the waters beat against them with a continuous roaring, sending the spray almost to the top. As the rocks grew steeper, they could see, by looking over the edge, that the vegetation was thinner here, forming a network now instead of a solid covering of green. Patches of white limestone and black volcanic rock were visible, and here and there dark holes and caverns around which the rock-nesting swallows wheeled.

"Those caves probably contain quantities of the birds' nests so relished by the Chinese," remarked the scoutmaster. "These are the kind of swallows, if I mistake not, that build them."

"How can any one eat birds' nests?" said Dick in disgust.

"These nests are something like gelatine in appearance," explained the Doctor, "and the best ones are almost pure white. However, I don't want to eat them myself."

The chasms disappeared as they went on and the rock wall became so steep and smooth that little vegetation could find a foothold. It was of black rock and almost like an artificial wall built to keep out the



“What’s That?” Cried Dick. “It Looks Like a Wrecked Boat.”

sea that dashed against its base. Farther on the roar of the surf lessened, for here a reef, now almost entirely under water, protected the shore somewhat.

"What's that?" cried Dick suddenly. "Out there on the reef? It looks like a wrecked boat."

"It certainly is," exclaimed Rod. "It seems to be part of the hull of a boat, not a very large one I should say."

The Doctor took out his field glasses and examined the dark mass that lay far out on the reef, the waves washing it.

"It is part of a small boat," he said.

"Is it the rowboat we came ashore in?" Fred asked anxiously.

"No, it looks to me like a native boat, a little sailing vessel probably. It may have lain there for some time. There is certainly no sign of life about it."

"Can't we go out there and examine it?" Dick was on fire for an adventure.

"Not until the tide is out," answered the Doctor. "The reef is under water except in a few places. We shall have to come back tomorrow when the tide is low if we want to get out there."

142 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

The lads turned away rather reluctantly, but the wreck furnished a subject for speculation for the rest of their trip. So great was their interest in the wrecked boat that they did not at first notice that they had come in sight of another island. It did not seem to be so very far away for they could see plainly enough its high, rocky walls crowned with a mass of greenery, but it was not near enough for them to distinguish details or make any guess as to whether it was inhabited or not.

A flock of green pigeons a little farther on gave them a good mark for their arrows. All aimed carefully and let fly almost together, but Bobby was the only one to bring down a bird. His joy over his success was somewhat dampened by the feeling, natural to the young hunter and never outgrown by many men, of compunction at having killed a beautiful bird. The tears came into his eyes as he picked it up. His father sympathized with him and explained that he, too, would much rather hunt with a camera, but that there were times like the present when it was necessary to kill one's food. "As such a time may come to anyone," he

said, "it is well to be able to shoot straight and hit your mark."

About half an hour later Fred remarked that the country seemed familiar to him. They were still walking along the top of the bank with the dense forest at a little distance to their right.

"Isn't that the place over there where we came out of the woods the first day we landed, when the storm came up?" he said. "Just where those two big palms with their tops touching seem to form a gateway."

"It looks like it," the scoutmaster replied. "Let's see if we can find any traces of our having been there before."

Although it was two weeks since they first landed they were able to find traces of their passage through the woods at this spot, proving that they had now been entirely around the island. It was nearly eleven o'clock and getting very hot, so they decided not to go farther, but to eat their lunch here. The pork they had brought with them Dr. Cameron found to be slightly tainted from being carried so far in the heat. So Rod and Dick went to the edge

144 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

of the cliff and tossed the meat into the sea. As it touched the water a shark raised its ugly head and seized it.

After a good rest they started back the same way they had come, as it was considerably shorter than to go around on the other side of the island. Just as they started Harold, who happened to be looking seaward, shouted, "A sea-serpent! a sea-serpent!"

Stretched out on the gently heaving water, sunning itself, was a great water snake, eight or nine feet long. It was near enough so they could see it clearly, a long, blue-black body barred with bright yellow. A stone thrown by Dick struck the water near it and it dived suddenly, rising to the surface again farther out.

"I'd rather not go in swimming around here, thank you," said Rod, "water-snakes and sharks,—ugh."

When opposite the reef they found the tide was so low that they could go out on the reef, but it was too near night to delay, so they decided to return the next day. They reached camp before dark, found everything undisturbed, and were tired

enough from their long tramp to turn in early.

“I wonder what’s in that old wreck of a boat,” said Fred to Karl, his closest neighbour, when they had gone to bed. “Maybe it belonged to some natives who live on an island near here—and maybe they were killed when their boat was destroyed in a storm—or maybe the sailors got ashore and are living somewhere on this island—and maybe—”

XVII

THE WRECK

THE patrol left camp the next day so as to reach the reef when the tide was low. The beach below the cliff the boys found to be of firm sand inlaid with honey-combed coral rock and pebbles. The reef was almost entirely out of water now, and, the sea being calm, no large waves dashed against it.

Leaving their shoes and stockings on the shore, they started out along the reef. Corals, some many-branched like thick bushes, others resembling deer antlers, beautiful sea-fans or gorgonias, as Dr. Cameron called them, sponges, queer sea-cucumbers, and various other growths, strange or beautiful, could be seen plainly through the water. Karl was the only one who lingered to look at them, however. The others were too eager to examine the wreck. They startled several herons engaged in their



*Dick Was the First One to Scramble upon the
Sun-bleached Remains of the Boat.*

usual occupation of fishing, and large fish hawks wheeled screaming above their heads. In some places they were obliged to wade and here they found it difficult going, for the reef was slippery and they had to pick their way with care.

Dick was the first one to scramble upon the sun-bleached remains of the boat, but only to meet with a disappointment. The hull, which was nearly intact except for its broken and splintered bow, appeared to be quite empty. She was evidently a small sailing vessel, such as the native traders use in their trips from island to island, but the sails and rigging and even the masts were gone, as well as whatever cargo she had carried, either taken away by the crew who abandoned her, or washed off by the sea. A coil of native rope and a small wooden chest were the only things remaining, the latter discovered by Dick in the little thatched cabin that occupied the centre of the boat.

"Perhaps it's a treasure chest," said Bobby, his eyes shining.

"Hardly, in a boat of this kind," laughed his father. "It has no lock, you'll notice."

148 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

Dick as finder had the privilege of opening the box, the others crowding around him.

"Nothing but rusty tools," he cried disgustedly. But the scoutmaster and the older boys did not share his contempt.

"These things will be more useful to us than treasure, for what would we do with gold here?" observed Fred, as Dick lifted from the box a mallet, a couple of chisels, an augur and a small saw. A tin box in one end was found to hold an assortment of fish-hooks, some small, others large and strong enough for deep sea fishing.

"This is a find well worth our trip out here," exclaimed the scoutmaster, "and as Fred says much more valuable to us than treasure."

The little cabin was built of rough planks. As these might be useful, the boys knocked it to pieces and carried some of the boards ashore. This was slow and difficult work as it took two to carry each plank along the slippery reef. Harold was the only one, however, who had an accident; he slipped into the water above his waist, but he clung to the board and Rod, who was carrying

the other end, kept him from slipping farther by pulling hard, so that he succeeded in scrambling up again. A badly scraped leg that the salt water caused to smart painfully was his only injury.

The boards were carried to the top of the cliff, so they would not wash away at high tide, as it was not possible to carry more than three of such heavy, clumsy planks back to camp on this trip.

It was dusk before the hot, tired, hungry party reached camp. As they approached the house Fred, ahead, was startled by something leaping or flying from one tree trunk to another, almost touching his face.

"What's that thing?" he exclaimed. "It looked like a lizard with wings. There!"—as he approached the tree on which the strange creature rested for a moment, then started on another flight.

The scoutmaster quickly flashed his pocket-light in that direction, and the lads got a fleeting view of a lizard-like creature apparently with wings spread.

"It must be a flying dragon," said the Doctor.

"A dragon?" cried Bobby. "I thought

150 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

there weren't any such things. Any way I thought they were great big things."

"The fairy story dragons are," laughed his father, "and I don't think we are in any danger of meeting that kind unless we go to fairyland. The real flying dragon, as it is called, is a sort of lizard."

"A lizard with wings?" asked Karl.

"Not exactly. It has no real wings, but merely a broad fold of skin along either side of its body which it can expand as a parachute to hold it up when it takes its long leaps from tree to tree or branch to branch. It stays quiet on a tree trunk in the daytime but at dusk begins to leap about."

Harold complained of a headache and did not want his supper, eating only a bit of sago cake, and turning in for the night immediately after. Dr. Cameron thought he was merely over-tired from the trips along the reef in the hot sun, but later in the night he was awakened to find the boy tossing and muttering deliriously in a high fever. The Doctor had fortunately brought ashore with him a little medical case, containing an anti-septic and a few simple remedies in

tablet form for fever and stomach troubles. He had debated with himself when the party left the ship whether it was worth while to bother with this little case when going merely for a day's outing. But one never knows how suddenly accident or sickness may come, especially in hot countries, and, remembering the Scout motto, "Be Prepared," he had slipped the little box into his knapsack. He had had use for the antiseptic on several occasions, and now he was glad indeed to have the fever medicine.

XVIII

HAROLD'S FEVER

FOR more than a week Harold was seriously ill, with fever running high every night and leaving him very weak. For the first two days he was unable to eat anything. What to give him was a problem, for their fare was not of a sort to tempt an invalid or be easily digested by him. A little pigeon broth with the fat carefully skimmed off, and bits of sago cake toasted brown were all he was able to take while the fever lasted.

By giving him regular doses of fever medicine and sponging his head and body frequently Dr. Cameron held his temperature down as well as he could. He felt the lack of ice, but the boys were willing, no matter how many times a day he asked them, to bring fresh water from the stream. Morning and evening they brought fresh ferns for his couch and were ready and

eager to do everything possible for his comfort.

On the eighth day the fever left him, but it was another week before he was able to get around much. During this time no explorations or long expeditions were undertaken, for the Doctor could not leave Harold and did not like to have the other boys go very far away, especially into unexplored places, without him. There was plenty to do to keep them busy and the weather was very hot so no one grumbled about this except Dick, who was impatient to explore every nook and corner of the island.

The longest trips made were to the cliff opposite the wreck, where the four older boys went twice to bring back planks. With these and bamboo they made a table and some seats near the fireplace, as well as seats for the porch. When the rust had been carefully removed with crab oil, the tools from the wreck proved very useful. Rod even found it possible to sharpen them by means of the oil and a hard greenish stone from the beach.

Finding the frequent trips for water rather tiresome, the boys rigged up an ap-

154 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

paratus of bamboo and rattan by means of which they could pull up buckets of water from the stream. Rattan was stretched tightly between two bamboo stakes, one at the top of the bank and the other in the bed of the stream. On this was hung a bucket to which another rattan was attached. The bucket was allowed to run down the rattan into the stream and when it was full was pulled up again, without more than half of the water spilling on the way. This was Fred's invention and he was very proud of it.

It was Roderick who conceived the idea of a flight of steps down into the ravine. He cut pieces of bamboo about two feet long, made notches at each end, and placing his bamboos at convenient distances apart on the ravine side, drove pegs through the notches, fastening the steps firmly to the ground. He also made a handrail of bamboo fastened to crossed stakes.

During the hottest part of the day the boys made arrows, and kegs, tubs and dishes of bamboo and cocoanut shells. They also tried their skill at weaving sleeping-mats of the long, slender leaves of the screw pine

and after a number of trials succeeded fairly well. An invention of Karl's Dr. Cameron found to be very useful when he had to sit up nights with Harold. Karl filled a slender bamboo joint with crab oil intending to make a lamp with a piece of pith for a wick. At first he was perplexed to find a means of supporting his wick, but finally hit upon the plan of laying two splinters of wood loosely tied together at the ends across the top of his bamboo with the piece of pith held in a vertical position between them, the lower end in the oil. Of course the pith became soaked with oil in a moment and burned with a fairly steady flame as long as it was not in a draught. Cocoanut oil, he discovered, burned even better than crab oil and without giving off any unpleasant odour.

Their small stock of matches had been exhausted, so the boys were obliged to make fire-drills and use them whenever they wanted a light. They had all, of course, learned to use the fire-drill, but this was the first time they had ever appreciated it as a real necessity.

One day as Rod was scrambling down

156 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

the ravine bank in a place where he had not been before, he slipped and slid the rest of the way to the bottom. Except for a few bruises he was unhurt, but on picking himself up he discovered that the soles of his shoes were covered with blue clay. He investigated and found that it was a bed of blue clay, soft and sticky from a little spring trickling through it, that had caused his fall.

This was a lucky accident, for he knew the clay would be useful for many purposes. Up to this time they had found only a little red clay which was not very sticky and cracked easily with heat. The first use Rod made of his find was for an oven. With rattans he wove a mould in the form of a hollow half-sphere. He then made a smooth floor of clay, placed the mould upon it, and covered it with a thick coating of clay mixed with a little sand, leaving a hole in the front for a door and making a clay chimney at the back.

This oven he dried carefully with a slow fire in the inside. It cracked in several places during the firing, but he filled the cracks with more clay and fired again, repeating the process twice when new cracks

came, until his oven was able to stand a hot fire. By keeping a good fire going for half a day, then raking out the coals and ashes, putting in the meat and sealing up the door and chimney with stones and clay, he found he could bake very successfully.

Providing food took up much of the boys' time. Part of the rope from the wreck was used to make a better noose for a crab trap, for the black sand beach beyond the stream was frequented at night by these ungainly creatures. These crabs, they discovered, fed on the rich, juicy fruit of the screw pine, as well as on cocoanuts, and became very fat.

The lads racked their brains for a plan to trap pigs, and Fred finally hit upon an idea. Near the edge of the forest he drove a large number of short bamboo stakes about a foot apart, alternating them in rows. These he intertwined with creepers, making a very good entanglement. As a bait he scattered about some refuse from meals, and the second night after the trap was completed several pigs from the herd that frequented that part of the island were caught in the maze. Awakened by the noise, Fred

158 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

and Rod hastened out in the moonlight and succeeded in killing a young pig with strong throwing-spears they had made of stout bamboo.

Fish, both in the stream and near the little reef that ran out from its mouth, were very plentiful, and catching them was easy enough with the new hooks. Fruit-pigeons of several varieties were also abundant, and Dick and Rod soon became skilful enough with bow and arrow to bring down their game about three times out of five. A few squirrels were also shot in this way. Cocoanuts, bananas and little wild plantains about the size of one's thumb were always to be had, but the staple article of diet was sago cakes, eaten hot, cold, fresh or dried. Salt-making was in process most of the time, and sugar was made from the sap of the borassus palm.

The things they missed most were bread, butter, milk and potatoes, though the sago cakes partly took the place of bread. They tried spreading them with crab oil which had been allowed to thicken to about the consistency of soft butter, but Fred and Dick were the only ones who cared to make more

than one trial of this substitute. Juicy fruit would also have been welcomed, but so far they had found nothing of the kind. Some slight attacks of stomach trouble due to their unusual diet and to the heat were soon remedied from the Doctor's medical case.

At odd moments Karl experimented with flute-making until he finally succeeded in producing an instrument that satisfied him fairly well. On this he played all the tunes and fragments of tunes he could remember, which were possible with the limited range of tones his instrument possessed. Discovering that Harold, even when too weak for anything else, enjoyed listening to his flute, Karl played for him, often an hour at a time. Harold, whose illness naturally made him very homesick, was very grateful for this kindness, and a firm friendship soon grew up between the two boys.

Clothes had to be washed frequently. Stockings were becoming badly worn and there was nothing to darn them with. Going bare-footed was out of the question on account of poisonous insects, nor could the lads even go bare-legged but with shoes on in the long grass for the same reason.

160 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

Fortunately they all had leggings, but these were hot and they did not wear them except for rough climbing and trips through dense forest. Unless the *Flying Fish* returned before long, however, they would soon be reduced to wearing leggings with no stockings under them.

Of the *Flying Fish* they seldom spoke, avoiding the subject as if by mutual consent; but as day after day and week after week passed, the fear grew that she had been wrecked and her crew lost in the storm, and the question of rescue became more and more serious. However, they seemed in no immediate danger of starvation and they were inclined to live in the present and be hopeful for the future. So they did not let their isolated position weigh on them very much, though all, except Dick, who never seemed to be troubled that way, had their moments of homesickness and discouragement.

To keep minds as well as hands occupied when there was no necessary work to do, Dr. Cameron proposed that they make collections of specimens of the plants, shells, insects and birds found on the island, and

he told them much about gathering, preserving and classifying these things. Into this occupation the boys entered with much interest and an eager rivalry soon grew up among them as to who should discover the greatest number of interesting specimens.

They were amazed to find what an almost endless variety of plant, insect and bird life there is on a rich tropical island. All the lads had pocket note-books and in these the scoutmaster advised them to keep, not only a brief record of what happened each day, but notes on the specimens they collected and the things they saw. It was not very difficult to press and dry botanical specimens, and with the help of camphor from Dr. Cameron's collecting-case, to preserve butterflies, beetles and other insects. The Doctor lamented that they had no way of preserving bird-skins, but could only keep the feathers and write descriptions in their note-books, accompanied by small sketches which the Doctor, Rod and Karl made. Rod was the most successful at this for he was fond of drawing and had considerable ability.

Fred wanted to make a map of the island

162 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

and, as no one had a sheet of paper large enough to suit him, he began it on a big, dried leaf, putting in the coast line as well as he could, but leaving the centre blank, as they had not yet explored it.

XIX

FOURTH OF JULY. THE EARTH- QUAKE

THE patrol had landed on the island during the first week in June, and by the time Harold was able to be up and around July had come. There was much discussion as to how they could best celebrate the Fourth. Harold was still weak, so another exploring expedition was out of the question.

"We ought to take possession of the island in the name of the United States," said Dick, as they sat and lay about the porch of the cabin after their noonday meal the day before the national holiday, "Raise a flag, fire a salute and all that."

"If we only had a flag," said Fred thoughtfully.

Bobby rose from the corner where he was sitting and went into the cabin. Presently he returned with a tiny United States flag

164 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

about six inches long, and handed it to Fred. Every one laughed, but Fred sprang to his feet and, holding up the little flag, cried, "Get up every one of you and salute your flag."

And every one obeyed, giving the salute as respectfully as if the flag had been six feet long. The thought of the many thousand miles that lay between them and their own dear country sobered them, and for a few minutes no one spoke.

Then Roderick asked, "How did you come to have it, Bob?"

"It's the one I wore in the front of my jacket at our scout meet Washington's birthday," was Bobby's answer. "I stuck it in my knapsack afterwards. When I packed up my things for the trip I didn't notice it, but after we left Honolulu I found it. I never thought of it again till just now."

"We'll have our flag-raising even if the flag is small," said Fred. "It's just as much the Stars and Stripes as if it was a hundred times as large."

The flag-raising was held at sunrise. Fred raised the little banner to the summit of a

long, slender bamboo pole, while the others stood at attention and sang "The Star-Spangled Banner," to the accompaniment of Karl's flute, a rather ragged accompaniment as the instrument would not produce all the notes. Cartridges were too scarce to permit firing a salute, but Fred made a little speech in which he formally took possession of the island in the name of the United States.

There had been some discussion over the name to be given it. Coyote Island, in honour of the Coyote Patrol, had been proposed but rejected as inappropriate, for as far as they knew there was nothing resembling a coyote to be found there. So "Cameron Island" was finally agreed upon.

Harold, who had once learned the Declaration of Independence by heart, recited it, memory failing him only once, and Rod delivered an extemporaneous oration which called forth much applause. A short prayer by the scoutmaster and the singing of "America" completed the formal ceremonies.

A programme of sports followed, in which Dick was victorious, winning first

166 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

place in the high-jump, the tree-climbing contest, distance and height judging, and stone-throwing, where his unusually accurate eye gave him the advantage. Rod came next, with three firsts, the hundred yard dash, the pole-vault and the fire-lighting match, while Fred and Karl each had two, the former in spear-throwing and the broad-jump, while the latter's strong arms gave him the advantage in throwing a heavy rock, instead of a shot, and in the archery contest to decide who could shoot the farthest. In the other archery match, held at rather short range with a palm-leaf target, little Bobby was victorious with Dick a close second. Harold was not strong enough to take part in anything but the fire-lighting and distance and height judging, so he acted as audience, while the scoutmaster was judge of all events.

Dinner on that eventful day consisted of crab soup, broiled pigeons, bamboo sprouts, hot sago cakes sweetened with palm sugar and spread with cocoanut, and bananas. After the meal the collections of specimens were brought out, looked over and compared, and the scoutmaster told the boys

many interesting things about the different plants, insects, birds and shells. When the worst heat of the day was over he proposed a butterfly hunt in the glen, where along the stream many beautiful insects were to be found, and promised a prize to the one who brought him the handsomest and rarest specimen. All except Harold entered into this contest with zest. Karl had made a butterfly-net of palm fibres, carefully and laboriously woven and tied, and had fastened it to a ring of rattan and a bamboo pole. The other boys, especially Dick, had laughed at the patient Karl for spending so much time and labour on his net, but now had to admit that he had the best of it, for he captured a beautiful butterfly of green and gold with an azure-blue, spoon-shaped tail and won the prize, a handsome pocket-knife with several blades which the boys had often admired.

After supper they all sat about on the cabin porch listening to tales of the experiences and adventures that Dr. Cameron had been through on scientific expeditions and which he told very entertainingly. It was rather later than usual when they turned in.

168 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

They had not been asleep very long when they were suddenly awakened by the rattling and rustling of the thatch as if a whole troop of squirrels were scampering over it. The house was shaking, at first gently, then more rapidly with violent jerks, the bamboo walls creaking as if they must fly to pieces.

All jumped up startled and frightened. They staggered towards the door, for the floor was heaving like the deck of a ship and they fell against each other, unable to keep their balance. Their first impulse was to get out of the house and down to the ground, unable as they were to realize that the ground itself was heaving.

By the time they were all out the earthquake shock was over, but before they could collect their shaken wits the earth began to quiver, then to heave again, so violently that Dick and Rod both lost their balance and fell to the ground, or rather, as Dick said afterwards, the ground came up to meet them. Their heads were giddy and all felt a sense of nausea as if seasick. The shock could not have lasted more than a minute but it was the longest minute the boys had ever known.

"How still it is!" exclaimed Karl, when the second shock was over and they had collected themselves a bit. The wind, which usually blew gently but steadily all night, had all gone down. There was not the slightest movement in the air. Neither was there a sound to be heard. The hum of insect life which they had been accustomed to hear night and day had ceased utterly.

When the lads attempted to return to the house they found that the lashing that fastened the ridge-pole to the uprights in front had loosened and the roof had partly fallen in. So they passed the rest of the night on the porch.

For the next three hours there were occasional shocks, but none so violent as the first two, and growing gentler and at longer intervals apart until they were barely perceptible. All this time the unnatural stillness continued until it became oppressive and almost appalling. They all drew a breath of relief when the breeze began to blow again, the piping of a tree-toad was heard and the birds began to twitter in a restless and frightened manner. All the boys had been more or less upset by the mo-

170 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

tion and Harold had been made very sick, but the effect wore off in a short time. It was some time, however, before the fear of other shocks allowed them to go to sleep again.

The next morning the tide was unusually high and there was a heavy surf, although there was little wind. The lads could not understand this, but Dr. Cameron thought it was due to the earthquake, which had probably caused slight upheavals of the ocean bed in some places.

Except for the partial wrecking of the roof, the shocks had done no serious harm, though furniture had been overturned, some of the bamboos in which provisions were kept upset and the stone fire-place partly destroyed. They were glad indeed that the house had not been shaken down. Its light, elastic, bamboo construction was well suited to a land of earthquakes.

XX

UP ROCKY RIVER

FOR some time the boys had been discussing an exploring trip into the interior of the island and up the low mountain that occupied its centre. Though Harold was improving steadily, he was not strong enough yet for such an expedition and Dr. Cameron did not wish to divide the party. In the meantime, however, several little trips were undertaken. The Doctor, Rod, Dick and Bobby went back to Coral Bay to see if the note for Captain Morton was still there. They found the cabin, which had been partly demolished on the previous visit, completely wrecked by the earthquake, and the scoutmaster's note buried under the wreckage. So he wrote another, fastening it this time in a cleft pole in a conspicuous position.

Almost every day shorter trips were made by various members of the patrol, up stream,

172 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

into the woods or along the shore, in search of game and specimens. The boys were constantly becoming more expert with the bow and arrow, as was necessary indeed for there now remained but a few rounds of ammunition. So the time passed until the middle of July was reached and Harold was at last strong enough to join an expedition up the mountain.

It was on a Monday morning that the patrol started out, in high spirits, on their long-delayed trip. They had planned to spend the night on the summit of the mountain and another day perhaps in exploring it, so they carried a good supply of dried sago cakes. The Doctor and Rod had the rubber blankets, and each of the others a sleeping-mat woven of screw-pine leaves and rolled like a blanket. All carried their bows and quivers, the Doctor and Fred their guns, Rod and Karl the axes, while Dick had a throwing-spear.

They followed the stream up the glen. As there had been but little rain since the third night of their stay on the island, the water was not so high as when they first discovered it, but it ran just as merrily,

rippling clear as crystal over the moss-covered rocks. Its bed was composed principally of pure white pebbles, among which bright-coloured stones, agate, jasper and others which the boys could not name, gleamed like jewels. The rocks bordering the stream and scattered here and there along its course were covered with mosses and ferns of surprising variety, some filmy and delicate, others with great, glossy, umbrella-like fronds, and clinging to the wet rocks with tiny rootlets. The tree-trunks at the edge of the stream were also covered with moss and bore tufts of small ferns, and in several places beautiful elk's horn ferns, as the scoutmaster called them, with great fronds shaped something like elks' antlers, and five or six feet long.

There were few flowers to be seen among the mass of greenery, but bright colour was supplied by the birds and hundreds of butterflies, which gleamed and danced over and around the stream, and settled on the banks in groups, orange, yellow, white, blue and green. Some of them, that the Doctor called swallow-tailed butterflies, had long, slender projections extending from their

174 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

hind wings. The boys captured several new varieties to add to their specimens, a particularly pretty one being amber colour with black fringes to its wings, while another was purple shot with bronze. A very fine one that Karl secured measured more than seven inches across the wings, which were velvety black and fiery orange. Bobby caught a curious one, which when at rest on a branch or stalk looked just like a dead leaf, being brownish in colour with dark, radiating lines like the veins of a leaf, but in flight displayed the rich purple upper surface of its wings. When at rest the wings were closely pressed together, showing only the dull under side, and the head and antennæ drawn back between them.

Bright-coloured kingfishers flew along the banks or darted across the stream. Most of them were blue and white, but the boys noticed some large, red ones such as they had not seen before. Dick found the curious hanging nest of one of these birds, but when he went near it a cloud of bees swarmed out and drove him away, stinging him in several places. Apparently their nest was in the same mass as that of

the kingfisher, and they effectually protected it from being robbed. While he was applying an antiseptic to Dick's stings and then plastering them with soft mud, the Doctor said that he had read that bees were always to be found near the red kingfisher's nest, but did not know the reason for this strange partnership.

Hornbills, with big, ugly bills, flew among the trees, their great wings making a noise "like a steam engine," Dick said. Little green and brown fly-catchers, graceful and swallow-like in flight, red lories, green parakeets and several kinds of fruit-pigeons, green, grey and reddish-brown, flew in and out among the foliage, while little green starlings ran up and down the trees. Green, grey and brown lizards rested on the tree trunks waiting for their prey, flies and other small insects.

As they went on the glen narrowed, the walls on either side closing in on them until there was room for only a narrow belt of trees and ferns along the edge of the stream. The sides of the ravine, which at first were covered with shrubs, creepers and even trees, grew steeper until the ex-

176 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

plorers found themselves passing through a narrow chasm with perpendicular walls of dark rock where only a few creepers could find a foothold.

The stream was narrower, deeper and very swift here, coming down in a series of little rapids, for they were no longer on level ground, but going up a gradual ascent. So narrow did the glen become that there was barely room for them to pass in single file over the moss-covered rocks at the stream's edge. Sometimes the way was blocked by great boulders over which they had to scramble, the Doctor and the larger boys pulling and boosting the smaller ones. Once Rod lost his foothold and went into the stream up to his waist. The sun did not reach them now and they saw no more bright-coloured birds and butterflies and no vegetation except the ferns and mosses on the damp rocks and an occasional creeper clinging to the steep wall. The water was colder here and tasted most refreshing, but the glen was gloomy and there was a damp chill in the air.

The sound of roaring waters ahead warned them of a water-fall which came into view

suddenly as they rounded a turn. Rod, in the lead, cried out at the beautiful sight. The chasm was abruptly closed a short distance ahead by a wall of black, volcanic rock down which the foaming water poured into a deep pool. The stream seemed to issue directly from a great black hole in the rock wall.

"Well," exclaimed the scoutmaster, "this seems to be the end, or I suppose I ought to say the beginning of Rocky River. It is evident that we can't follow it much farther."

"Can't we climb up and get a look at the place where it comes out of the rock?" asked Roderick eagerly.

"We will if we can get up," his father answered, as curious as the boys to examine this freak of nature.

On examination they found that across the rock wall extended a narrow ledge over which the water shot from the mouth of the cavern. If they could reach this ledge they could get a look into the cave and perhaps enter it. Where the opposite side of the ravine and the rock wall came together there was some vegetation and here they

178 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

hoped to find a place where they could ascend, but first they had to cross the stream. It was too wide to jump, too deep to wade and there were no rocks conveniently placed for stepping-stones. So the Doctor, Fred, Karl and Dick took the axes and went back down the glen to a wider place where there were trees. Here they cut two strong young trees which they carried and dragged back to where the others were waiting. In getting their load over the boulders and through the narrowest part of the ravine every one but Dick managed to slip into the water at least once, but he was surer-footed and escaped a wetting. The trees were laid close together across the stream and on this narrow bridge the explorers crossed.

The place they had chosen for ascent looked possible, though steep, so they decided to try it. Dick wanted to go first, but Dr. Cameron thought he had better go himself. With the help of a few creepers and shrubs he climbed up and gained the ledge. Letting down one end of a long creeper to the boys below, he told Dick to tie it around his waist. This Dick did, ar-



The Machinery Was Disabled and the Ship Was Obligated to Trust to Her Sails.



iving safely, and the others followed one by one, all secured against falling in the same way.

The ledge was wide enough so they could walk along it carefully. Harold turned white at the sight of the narrow pathway and the gulf below, but the Doctor placed him between himself and Fred and advised him not to look down. So he gained courage to make the short passage.

Reaching the mouth of the cave they found it possible to enter. As the scout-master flashed his pocket-light a number of swallows nesting over the arch of the doorway were disturbed and flew down over the boys' heads, making the cavern echo with their sharp cries.

The cave was a narrow one, scarcely more than a tunnel, with just room enough for one to walk between the walls and the water. The walls and ceiling were covered with what Bobby at first thought were icicles, but the Doctor explained that they were stalactites, formed from the minerals in the water which dripped slowly but continually from the rock above and on every side. These stalactites glittered when the light

180 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

flashed upon them, giving a ghostly impression to the cavern. This impression was deepened by the echoing and re-echoing of the lads' voices, as if the spirits of the mountain were calling back to them.

As they advanced the tunnel narrowed until there was no longer room to walk, beside the stream. On sounding it with his spear Dick found the water much too deep to wade. It looked as if they must retreat; the Doctor flashed his light along the walls, however, and found a hole or passageway that seemed to lead into another cavern. Through this Dick crawled and shouted to the others to follow him.

This cave was so large that the Doctor's light failed to reveal its farther wall. Stalactites of all sizes and shapes hung from the ceiling and the rock floor felt damp and cold. The explorers did not penetrate far into this cavern for the air was so close and stifling that they were glad to beat a retreat and get back into the "Cave of the Stream," as Harold called it. It was now afternoon and they were all very hungry, so they made their way back along the passage as rapidly as possible.

"I wonder where the stream comes from," said Karl, after they had descended to the bottom of the ravine.

"It is probably formed from springs somewhere in the depths of the mountain," Dr. Cameron answered. "It may even come from a subterranean lake, but I am afraid we shall never find out as we cannot follow it any farther."

XXI

THE FOREST

WITHOUT crossing, they made their way back down the glen to a wider place where the bank had been gullied out so as to afford them a chance of ascent. At the edge of the river they built a fire and ate their lunch of toasted sago cakes and bananas. Rod cut several long, slender bamboo joints and the boys filled these and their water-bottles, tying pieces of palm-leaf over the tops of the bamboo carriers to keep the water from spilling, and slinging them across their backs with their quivers. The stream was the only fresh water they had found on the island and it seemed probable that they would not come across any more.

After a short noon rest they climbed the bank and made their way along the top over rising ground through a rather thick

growth of trees and shrubs, where it was necessary to use the axes, to the head of the glen above the water-fall, of which they had another view, this time from above. Here they were much interested in a gigantic tree, with great roots springing from the trunk at some distance from the ground and twisting in and out and around about. Roderick said the whole lower part of the tree looked like a bunch of enormous snakes twisted over and around each other, and the others agreed that his description was a good one. Dr. Cameron called it a Kanary tree and said that the nuts were good eating, but they were evidently not ripe as none had fallen.

As they went on the boys saw several more of these curious trees, as well as great fig trees, the trunk of each a veritable forest of stems and roots, so that it was hard to believe that it was only one tree and not a grove of them. They found one which appeared to have begun to grow in mid air, sending upwards from this point great, far-spreading branches and downwards a pyramid of twisting, sprawling roots. They made their way between these roots and

184 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

stood in the centre with the tree-trunk a good fifty feet above their heads.

"How on earth did such a great tree ever start to grow way up there?" asked the puzzled Karl. "How could it begin up in the air and send its roots down?"

"Maybe it was growing with its roots in the ground like other trees and an earthquake came along and threw it up," suggested the ingenious Dick.

"I think there is a more probable explanation than that," laughed the scout-master. "Do you see that little tree over there growing up in the fork of a larger one and sending down air roots? Well, that was probably the way this one began. A seed was dropped, by a bird perhaps, high up in the fork of another tree. In this wonderful climate where everything grows so marvellously it wouldn't be strange if it germinated and sent roots down towards the ground. These roots became so big and strong that they choked and destroyed the old tree, just as you have seen vines kill trees at home. Then the old tree decayed and fell away, leaving our fig as you see it."

"It doesn't seem to have any real trunk,"

said Karl; "just a mass of branches and roots growing out from the same spot."

On these great fig trees, where the fruit was apparently ripe, they saw many flocks of pigeons, large green ones, little ones, some green with magenta-stained, white breasts, others greyish-green with yellow wings, and long-tailed, reddish-brown ones. Here also they heard the mellow whistle of the mino bird, but did not get a look at one. The only animals they saw were little, short-tailed, black monkeys and squirrels.

As they went on, the ground still rising gradually, the forest thickened. Rattans and other climbing bush ropes or lianas, many armed with thorns, draped the great forest trees and had to be pushed aside with sticks or cut through, while a thick undergrowth of ferns and shrubs made walking very difficult and tiresome. Once Karl's glasses were caught in a creeper and jerked off, but fortunately were not broken. In some places the trees were so intertwined and bound together with lianas, many of them almost as thick as a man's arm, that it was quite impossible to cut one's way through, and several détours had to be made

186 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

around these tangled masses of trees and creepers. Once they saw a big, dead tree hanging at an angle of forty-five degrees, supported by stout lianas which alone held it from falling to the ground.

Ugly, black, forest leeches were plentiful here, but the boys' heavy shoes and tightly-wound leggings prevented these troublesome insects from getting at their flesh. To be sure the leggings were hot and uncomfortable, but the lads had learned by experience that it was better to wear them when penetrating thick woods. Only a few days before Dick and Rod had gone hunting without theirs and the leeches, clinging to their legs, had drawn blood until their ragged stockings were saturated. Dick still had a couple of troublesome sores where he had carelessly pulled the leeches off, leaving bits of their suckers in the wounds.

As the large trees became more dense, the undergrowth began to disappear, until it consisted merely of broad-leaved gingerworts and a few ferns, which the Doctor called Lindsayas, having fronds of steel-blue instead of green. The ground here was covered deep with leaf-mould and

fallen leaves, however, so that walking was slow work. The straight tree-trunks rose around them to the height of one hundred feet or more and the boys became interested in noting the different kinds of stems, some round and smooth, some jointed, fluted or rough, some covered with prickles, others gnarly, and of various shades of brown, grey and reddish-copper colour, blotched here and there with silvery lichens or small ferns. High up overhead in the tops orchids climbed upward to the sunlight, but down here the travellers could see nothing of them except an occasional patch of fallen petals on the moss at their feet.

The sun could not reach them here, only a dim, diffused light, and there were no bright colours, for the birds and butterflies, like the flowers, were far up above in the sunlight. There were some insects, however, the most unpleasant of which were great spiders, one large, black one with yellow spots being fully six inches across. Some of their webs had lines almost as strong as fine cotton thread. There were also a few centipedes.

Before starting Dr. Cameron had noted

188 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

carefully the direction in which he wished to go to gain the summit of the mountain by the most direct route, and it was well that he did so, for they were obliged to lay their course almost entirely by the compass.

As they continued to ascend they began, to their delight, to come upon forest fruit trees with edible, ripe fruit, some of which had fallen to the ground. The first of these fruit trees had dark-green, poplar-like leaves and the fruits hanging two or three in a cluster. This the scoutmaster said was a Tampui tree, and the fruit, which had a yellow pulp, they found to be slightly acid. As they had not had a taste of anything acid since landing on the island, and, in this hot weather, had often longed for something of the sort, they found the tampui very refreshing.

Farther on they came upon a tree with spreading branches which bore, near the end, fruit of a rusty-green colour, the husk covered with spikes. This, the Tarippe, or Trap-fruit, had a soft and juicy, milk-white pulp and leathery coated seeds. The trap-fruit, the Doctor told them, was related to

the bread-fruit so much used in the South Pacific Islands, and he bade them save the seeds to roast for supper. The boys did not care so much for it as for the acid tampui. Another fruit found was the Langsat, which was about the size of a pigeon's egg with a white pulp within a leathery husk. But the boys, except Dick, who preferred tampui, agreed that the rambutan, a hairy-husked fruit, with a white, jelly-like pulp of a refreshing, slightly acid taste, was the best of these forest fruits, although these wild rambutans were little things, about the size of a large strawberry and something the same colour with their reddish husks.

These fruit trees were frequented by birds, green barbets, hornbills, little starlings, black and white orioles and pigeons of several varieties. Graceful palm trees with reddish-yellow fruit the scoutmaster said were Betelnut trees. "The seed of the fruit," he added, "is chewed by the natives of this part of the world and affects them like a narcotic, developing a disgusting habit."

As they were passing beneath a fruit tree Dick was suddenly startled by a large tree-

190 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

snake which uncoiled itself and thrust its head down from an overhanging branch within a few feet of his face. He jumped back and struck at it with his bamboo spear, but his blow was not hard enough to have any effect. The snake merely slipped to the ground and darted its head towards him. Rod, who had come up just in time, sprang forward and dealt it such a blow with his axe that he cut it completely in two about a foot below its head.

For once the fearless Dick was thoroughly frightened and his face was white as he bent to examine his terrible assailant. The snake was a slender one about six feet long and so exactly the green of the foliage that it was no wonder he had not noticed it until its head swung down in his pathway. It had a double row of hooked fangs in wide-set jaws, and the Doctor said it was undoubtedly poisonous. Fortunately, he said, these tree snakes are of sluggish disposition and seldom attack a human being. It was not strange that after this little adventure Dick was not so eager to be ahead during the rest of the walk through the woods.

They had been going through the forest for more than two hours when they were brought to a sudden halt. Their way was blocked by a bamboo fence overgrown with creepers.

XXII

A SURPRISING DISCOVERY

THEY stopped and stared at one another in amazement. A bamboo fence—this meant people on the island, natives probably, and hitherto they had not seen the slightest trace of human beings. The fence was higher than their heads, but a little farther along was a gap and with one accord they made for this. Dick was the first to reach it, with Rod close at his heels.

The sight that met their eyes was a surprising one, a clearing containing half a dozen little bamboo houses raised on piles like their own and arranged in an irregular semicircle. Within this semicircle a garden had evidently been planted, but left for some time neglected. Behind the houses rose a grove of fruit trees. There was no sign of life about the place. The fence was partly broken down, the thatch of the



The Sight That Met Their Eyes Was a Surprising One.

A SURPRISING DISCOVERY 198

cabins had holes in it, and the garden was overgrown with weeds, creepers and coarse grass.

"The place seems to be entirely deserted," said the Doctor, after a few moments' inspection over Dick's head. "Let's see if we can find an opening where we can get through and take a look around."

After following the fence for a little distance they came upon a wider gap evidently intended as a gate, for an overgrown and hardly discernible path led from it into the forest. Here they entered.

"Beans, hurrah!" shouted Rod as they started across the deserted garden. Then he stopped and looked somewhat apprehensively towards the houses, half expecting to see a crowd of natives come hurrying out at the sound of his voice. But the only thing that answered him was a barbet screaming in a fruit tree.

Catching sight of a vine that looked familiar to him Dick made a dive at it, and a minute later straightened up with a great water-melon in his arms and a smile almost as big as the melon. Several of the plants they did not know, but Fred and the Doc-

194 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

tor recognized sweet potatoes, while cucumber and melon vines ran riot.

"I hope the place is deserted," said Karl, "so we can have all these things we want. The very sight of them makes me feel half-starved."

They approached the nearest of the houses rather cautiously and Fred peeped across the narrow porch into the doorway. All seemed silent and deserted, so, followed by the Doctor, he climbed the bamboo ladder and went in. Except for the ants, spiders and other insects that had taken possession, the cabin was quite empty.

In the meantime the others had entered another house and found it also silent and empty. When Dick, however, started to go into the smallest and most ruinous of the group, he was startled by something moving inside. He backed down the ladder in a hurry, but burst into a laugh when a little black monkey peeped cautiously out of the door, then scuttled out and climbed to the roof where it sat chattering excitedly.

All the houses proved to be entirely deserted. No mats or cooking utensils remained in them, and the roofs were all

A SURPRISING DISCOVERY 195

more or less out of repair. They had apparently not been occupied for some time. The garden, Dr. Cameron thought, looked as if it had not had any care since the last rainy season.

"I don't believe there has been any work done here during the last six months," he said, "and it may have been longer."

Behind the houses was a large grove of fruit trees. The boys were delighted to recognize orange and lime trees, though disappointed to find the small oranges apparently quite green. The Doctor, however, thought these might be a different variety from the yellow ones they were used to, and on cutting into one he found he was right, for it was quite ripe and deliciously rich and juicy in spite of its grass-green skin. To the boys the juicy fruit tasted especially good after their hot, tiresome walk.

Not only oranges but big, yellow bananas, pawpaws as large as small melons, with a flavour somewhat like apricots, and mangos with tough, green skins and yellow pulp, grew in the orchard. A fruit about the size of an orange but with a dark-purple rind

196 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

the Doctor called Mangosteen, and another queer-looking fruit with a leathery skin protected by strong spines he said was Durian. Of course the boys were anxious to taste them all. They were loud in their praises of the pawpaw and mangosteen. The latter had a refreshing, snow-white pulp, which Fred said tasted like a nectarine with a little strawberry and pineapple added. Some of the mangos were very good, but the fruit of one tree had an unpleasant taste of turpentine.

"Now we'll try the durian," said the Doctor with a smile as he picked one up from the ground. "Better keep from under the tree. If one of these fruits falls on you it may hurt you badly. These stout, sharp spines will tear right through your clothes."

The boys crowded around as he applied the point of his knife to some faint lines running lengthwise of the hard, tough rind. As he cut through, however, they all drew back in disgust at the strong and disagreeable odour.

"It's spoiled," said Dick.

"No," laughed the scoutmaster, "it's just ripe. Come, try it. You'll find it good."

A SURPRISING DISCOVERY 197

And he held out a piece of cream-coloured pulp.

"With that smell!" exclaimed Rod.
"Ugh, it's like spoiled onions."

The Doctor laughed and ate a piece. Then curiosity got the better of Dick and he gingerly put a small piece in his mouth.

"Umm," he said. "It is good. Feels smooth just like custard and tastes—different from anything else, but it's good. Give me some more."

This gave the others courage to try it, but with varying judgments. Karl agreed with Dick that it was delicious. Fred and Rod were not quite certain whether they liked it or not, Bobby didn't think he did, while Harold was very sure he did not and could not be persuaded to touch it again. None of them could decide what it tasted like, however. Fred said there was an almond flavour about it, while Harold declared he tasted onion in it.

It was after four o'clock when they reached the clearing and some time had been spent in examining the garden and orchard. So they decided it was not wise to go farther that day. The discovery of a

198 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

little stream trickling over a stony bed at the farther end of the orchard confirmed their opinion that this was a good place to make camp.

The houses were examined and the cleanest and soundest one selected. It was plentifully supplied with ants, spiders and other insects. But the boys painted the posts with sticky palm juice to keep out more intruders and then went on an insect hunt inside the dwelling, killing all they could find, and making the place as habitable as possible. They were rather concerned to find a large nest of mason wasps on the roof, and thought at first they had better destroy it. But the scoutmaster advised them to let it alone.

"If we don't disturb the wasps they probably won't disturb us," he said, and this proved to be the case.

They had no meat, fish or fowl for supper that night, but no one complained, for sweet potatoes roasted in the ashes, boiled beans, sliced green cucumbers, water melon and fruit, with some of the sago cakes they had brought with them, made a sumptuous meal.

A SURPRISING DISCOVERY 199

Since their first few nights on the island the little party had not felt so lonely, strange and remote from the world as they did that evening. They sat on the narrow porch of the little cabin looking out over the neglected garden, appearing even more unkempt and forsaken in the moonlight, to the ring of dark, mysterious forest, which encircled them.

It was not a silent forest, however, for the night wind stirred the tree-tops, insects buzzed and hummed incessantly and the wailing cries of owls and other night-birds sounded now and then, sometimes far away, sometimes close at hand. A night hawk and several bats swooped back and forth through the garden hunting for insects.

When within sight and sound of the sea the lads had never felt quite so shut off from mankind and from everything known and familiar to them as to-night, surrounded on every side by this strange and unexplored forest. The dark, silent, partly ruinous little cabins only made the place seem more lonely and deserted. Unconsciously, as the evening wore on, they drew closer together

200 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

and conversation died away or was carried on in half-whispers.

Fortunately for them, perhaps, they were all thoroughly tired out with their hard journey, and not even the strangeness of their surroundings or the bothersome mosquitoes could keep them awake long. They agreed, however, that it was best to keep a guard in this strange place, with wild animals perhaps in the wood beyond. In spite of some sleepy protests from Bobby, the scoutmaster and the patrol leader decided that the little fellow and Harold, who, not having fully regained his strength, was completely worn out, should be excused from guard duty. Beginning at nine-thirty, five watches of an hour and a half each were arranged, while the remaining time from five to six was, in addition, divided between Dr. Cameron and Fred. A pile of fuel ready to kindle was placed in front of the cabin, but was not lighted until after the moon had gone down.

About midnight the sleepers were all startled wide awake by a tremendous crash in the forest. For a moment they were frightened, but no further disturbance fol-

A SURPRISING DISCOVERY 201

lowed, so they concluded that the noise had probably been made by a falling tree somewhere in the wood. Half an hour later they had a visit from two inquisitive monkeys, who dropped from a tree to the roof and thence scrambled down to the ground to investigate the fire, but did not dare go very near.

In every wakeful moment the boys, in that strange place, were impressed with the same overpowering sense of isolation that had come to them earlier in the evening. The sea had seemed a sort of visible bond with the rest of the world, and now they could no longer even hear it.

XXIII

UP THE MOUNTAIN

AFTER a breakfast of sweet potatoes, sago cakes, beans and fruit, they filled their water-bottles, and bamboo carriers from the stream and their pockets with juicy oranges, pawpaws and mango-steens, and resumed their journey. They also carried a few sweet potatoes and beans for future meals and Dick longed to take a water-melon, but it was too large and heavy.

Going through a gap in the fence beyond the orchard they re-entered the forest. The fence and the trees at the edge of the clearing were draped with orchids, but with the exception of some tiny, pink blossoms and some long spikes of golden-brown, spotted ones, that grew far above their heads, the flowers were not at all showy.

Almost from the edge of the clearing the ground sloped steeply, and as they climbed

up the woods became thinner, though the trees were still large. One tree of which they saw several specimens had great lumps of resin attached to the trunk. This the scoutmaster said was a Dammar tree, a sort of pine. The resin if pounded fine and packed in a palm-leaf tube made, he said, a good substitute for a candle as it burned with a bright and steady flame.

As they went on they frequently found, jutting out from the leaf-mould and clay soil, ledges of moss-covered rock, troublesome to climb. As the ground grew steeper and more rocky, the large trees became fewer and the number and variety of shrubs and tree-ferns increased, but the forest was still dense. There were many birds to be seen. Among them they noticed several new ones, including a beautiful, large ground-thrush of velvety black with pure white breast, azure-blue shoulders and vivid crimson underparts, and a golden oriole with black wings and tail.

Roderick called the others' attention to a curious, climbing shrub. "Isn't that a pitcher-plant?" he asked.

"Of course it is," said Karl, examining

204 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

it with interest. "I've read about them, but these pitchers are a different shape from those I've seen pictures of."

The boys crowded around to look at the curious, long pitchers, mottled with purple, hanging from the leaves, and each holding about a half a pint of water. Harold, who had read of travellers almost dead of thirst being saved by finding pitcher-plants, wanted to taste the water, but when he saw that it was full of small insects, he changed his mind.

"The water is pure enough," the scout-master said, "and can be drunk if necessary, but it is usually full of insects as you see and not very inviting."

As they climbed higher up the mountain-side they came across a number of pitcher-plants of various kinds. The commonest had green pitchers blotched with purple or red, but some bore all red ones of a different shape, and they found a few of a tall-growing variety with beautifully shaped white pitchers daintily marked with crimson. These latter plants climbed the trees to the height of thirty or forty feet. Some of the plants had curious, swollen places in

the stems and these the boys discovered had been punctured by ants, in search of water perhaps.

The ground grew constantly steeper, vegetation became thinner and smaller, and the big, forest trees disappeared entirely. Rough, steep ledges of rock became more frequent. Often they had to go around for a considerable distance to find a place where they could climb up. This caused much delay, and the hot sun, which got a better chance at them now, made climbing tiresome work. Moreover they not only had to struggle through low, bushy vegetation, but the ground was covered knee-deep with mosses and decaying leaves, with jagged rocks cropping through here and there.

It was nearly noon when they came out from among scrubby bushes on to a steep, barren slope, with the summit, it seemed, only a short distance above them. As there was very likely no shelter at the summit from the burning sun, they decided to eat lunch before going farther. They built a fire on a ledge of rock and roasted their potatoes. The beans they had brought with them had been boiled the night before, as

206 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

they did not wish to waste their scanty supply of water in cooking them. So they were put between layers of leaves in the hot ashes and heated through. They were not exactly baked beans, Rod said, just boiled beans warmed up. The juicy fruit was particularly acceptable after their hard, hot climb.

In spite of the heat of mid-day, so eager were they to reach the top that they delayed but a short time before resuming their climb. Tall, coarse grass now took the place of shrubs. This grass only served to conceal the sharp stones and slag, remains from the days when the summit of the mountain had been an active volcano, and which made walking painful and troublesome. A perpendicular ledge of rock had to be skirted until a possible place of ascent was found. Even here it was so steep that the boys had to put their wall-climbing drill to practical use to get up at all.

Beyond the ledge the grass almost entirely ceased, the mountain-side being covered with a reddish clay paved with slag and small blocks of lava. The ground was very steep, and the loose slag and lava such

uncertain footing that they were obliged to go on all fours, the rocks bruising their legs and the sun beating mercilessly down on them.

As he neared the summit, Rod, who was ahead, felt a queer, shivery sensation down his spine and a choking in his throat. He remembered having just such a feeling once when as a very small boy, he ran away, and, wandering off where he had never been before, climbed a hill to see what lay beyond.

Rising to his feet he reached his hands up to the top of an almost perpendicular bit of rock wall and scrambled up.

XXIV

IN A VOLCANO'S CRATER

RODERICK stood on the edge of a barren plateau of considerable extent. Turning to look back, he caught his breath at the wonderful sight. The rich green of the dense forest extended beneath him down the mountain-side, beyond, the ocean gleamed in the sun, and far off in the distance he could just barely discern a low-lying group of islands. For a moment he could think of nothing but the beauty of the view. Then a practical thought struck him and he scanned the horizon for a ship, but there was none in sight, only forest and sea and far-distant islands.

In a few minutes Dick joined him. Dick had intended to be the first to reach the top, but slipping on a rock that turned under him, he had slid back for some distance and so been beaten by Rod. He was a little out of patience, for he loved to be

first and hated defeat of any kind, but the sight that greeted his eyes put all such selfish thoughts out of his head at once.

The others, one by one, soon joined them. Karl had paused to help Harold and relieve him of some of the things he was carrying, adding them to his own load. So he came last. All were tired, panting and dripping with perspiration. The plateau appeared to be entirely without shade. Fortunately, however, a good breeze tempered the burning sun to some extent.

Recovering breath from the climb, the explorers started across the plateau, eager to see what lay ahead of them. The ground here was of hard-baked clay sown with rocks. Occasional tufts of coarse, dried grass were the only vegetation.

"What are those patches of yellowish stuff?" asked Fred as they proceeded.

"Smell of it," suggested the scoutmaster.

Fred bent down and put his nose close to a whitish-yellow coating on a large rock.

"Ugh!" he exclaimed, choking; "sulphur."

"Yes, sulphur from the volcano."

As they went on the sulphur incrusta-

210 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

tions on ground and rocks increased. Holes and cracks in the hard ground became frequent. Suddenly a jet of steam burst out from a crevice at Dick's feet, causing him to jump back quickly. He was coughing and spluttering when Dr. Cameron came up to him.

"What's the matter?" asked the latter. "That little geyser was showing off for your benefit."

"I thought the whole place was blowing up under my feet," Dick exclaimed; "and it smelled so it choked me."

"That's the sulphur in it. The old mountain isn't quite as dead as it looked."

They came across several of these little geysers issuing from cracks and holes, some of them very deep. As Fred was gazing down one crevice, trying to see what was at the bottom, a jet of steam rose so suddenly that he just escaped a bad scalding.

A little ridge of clay and lava rocks lay in front of them. Dick, who was ahead now, scrambled up and stopped still. Then he turned and called back excitedly, "Hurry up back there. You can see right down into the inside of the old mountain."

The others hastened to join him and found themselves looking down into a deep hole, irregularly circular in form. The sides and bottom were incrustated with sulphur, and near the centre was a pool. In the middle of this pool jets rose several feet high and a cloud of vapour hung over it.

"The crater!" exclaimed Karl with unusual excitement for him. "I've always wanted to see one." And he started, half-climbing, half-sliding down into the hole.

"Is it safe, do you think?" asked Harold, looking down rather doubtfully at the boiling pool and clouds of mist.

"I'm going anyway," and Dick plunged after Karl.

"I don't think there is any danger. Only be careful not to get burned by the hot water and steam," the Doctor said, beginning to descend.

Karl and Dick found the floor of the crater composed of sand strewn with lava blocks incrustated with sulphur, and broken by occasional springs and jets of hot water. One curious sight was a small pool of liquid mud, coloured blue, red and yellowish-white in patches from the salts and minerals it

212 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

contained, and bubbling and boiling constantly. As he approached to examine it Karl felt the ground under his feet bend like thin ice.

"Don't go too close, Dick!" he said, retreating carefully, "or you'll go through."

"Oh, you're too careful, old Caution," retorted Dick. "I want to see—*wow!*" For just then his foot broke through the crust into the hot mud. He drew it out covered with mud above the ankle, and retreated in a hurry.

"Geel!" he exclaimed, "that mud's *hot*. It almost burned my shoe."

A few minutes later Karl had an accident. He was examining a small jet of steam rising between rocks that were warm, almost hot, to the touch. Suddenly the geyser came up in a burst, scattering scalding spray all over him, burning his face and hands in several places and choking him with its fumes.

"Ouch!" cried the usually impassive lad; "that's the first time I ever was glad I wore glasses. I'd have burned my eyes good I guess if they hadn't been protected."

Fortunately his burns were slight, but for all that decidedly painful. Dick sug-

gested he put mud on them to keep out the air and this relieved the sting somewhat.

The sulphur fumes and other gases grew still more unpleasant as they approached the boiling pool. It was perhaps twenty feet across, with three or four jets in the centre rising five or six feet and throwing out showers of spray. Around this central pool was a strip of soft, boiling mud, lead colour, with whitish patches.

"That's the way pitch boils," said Rod, who with Fred, had now caught up with Karl and Dick, "in little bubbles that burst."

A band of thicker mud, boiling up here and there in rings that were continually forming and disappearing, came next, and then rocks of lava and limestone. Rod, stooping down for something, laid his hand on one of these rocks but drew it back hastily.

"It's as hot as the inside of an oven!" he exclaimed.

"Good place to roast potatoes," suggested Dick.

"Too much sulphur," Karl objected.
"They'd taste of the fumes."

214 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

The gases were indeed so strong, choking and sickening here that the party, with the exception of Karl, did not stay long at the edge of the pool, but skirted it rapidly on their way across the crater.

Karl, however, in his desire to examine the place, lingered and went as far out on the hot rocks as he dared. He stooped down to get a better view with his near-sighted eyes of the boiling mud which seemed different, he thought, from that in the other pools. Suddenly, however, dizziness seized him and he almost pitched head first into the seething mass. Faint and sick he struggled to his feet with a great effort, staggered back several feet and fell to the ground. Rod, glancing back, happened to see him fall, and with a shout to his father, started back on the run. Karl had not quite lost consciousness but was very sick and dizzy, and the Doctor and Rod had to carry him away from the pool. After a while he recovered sufficiently to go on with the others.

From the other side of the pool a tiny stream issued through the mud and rocks. It was almost boiling hot where it left the pool and of a whitish colour. The explor-

ers followed it towards the other side of the crater. At first there was no vegetation on its banks, but at a little distance from the crater wall clumps of scrubby grass began to appear along its edge. The water was still hot here, but contained less sulphur, though there was still enough left to make it very unpleasant as Dick found when he tasted it.

Several more springs and jets of hot water and mud were passed before the side of the crater was reached. Here the little stream entered a deep cleft in the rocky wall and was lost to view. In spite of their interest in this curious and wonderful place the boys were glad to climb up where the air was less saturated with unpleasant fumes, for every one was more or less sick to the stomach and Karl was still faint and dizzy.

XXV

THE LAKE

THEY continued their way across the plain, following the cleft through which the stream ran. Soon, however, a wide and deep chasm across their path forced them to turn to the right. As they neared the edge of the plateau another beautiful view of green forest and gleaming ocean spread out before them, and they could see plainly the island they had first noticed several weeks before. It was evidently small and very high and steep and, though they examined it carefully with Dr. Cameron's glass, they could discover no signs of habitation, nothing but a green mass surmounting precipitous rocks. Here, at the edge of the plateau, the chasm they had been following narrowed to a mere crevice which they jumped easily. They then skirted the edge of the plain. Below them

a perpendicular rock wall descended for at least fifty feet.

"It's lucky we didn't come up this side," said Fred. "We never could have climbed up here."

As they went on the slope became more gradual. Presently they came in sight of another plateau a little distance farther down the mountain.

"Hurrah, more fresh water!" cried Dick, for below them lay a small lake. The farther end was thinly wooded with scrubby trees.

"I was just thinking," the scoutmaster remarked, "that we couldn't possibly get back to the plantation before dark. It is nearly four now. We must find a place somewhere to camp for the night."

The boys scrambled down the slope and crossed a stretch of sandy soil, covered with tufts of short, coarse grass interspersed with rocks. There were no trees at this end of the lake, only bushes and grass, and the beach was composed of sand and rocks. The level of the lake was evidently lower than the bottom of the crater, for the little stream, now almost free from sulphur,

218 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

flowed into it. The course of the stream across the plain was distinctly marked by a line of shrubs and bushes.

"This lake must rise a good many feet higher in the rainy season," said Karl, calling the others' attention to the long, steeply shelving beach.

"Yes," the Doctor replied, "and it will probably be much lower before the dry season is over. It must be fed by springs, though, or it would have dried up before this."

They found the water rather warm from the hot sun but with little trace of sulphur, so that it could be used for both drinking and cooking. At the other end where trees grew the shore was muddy, so they decided to camp here on the clean sand and rocks. They were all glad of a bath, and while in the water they noticed that there were many small fish.

"We might catch some for supper if we only had hooks and lines," said Harold.

"I have some hooks in my knapsack," Roderick answered. "I happened to think just before we started that we might want to fish in Rocky River, so I slipped them in."

"You're a living application of the Scout motto 'Be Prepared,'" laughed Dick. "We can use bow strings for lines and bits of potato for bait."

They soon had a good mess of little white fish which the scoutmaster thought would be good eating. The fish were a lucky find for there were only ten sweet potatoes, six sago cakes and some fruit left of their store of provisions. A potato, half a sago cake, a little fruit and plenty of fish was the ration for each one that night. The fish were of good flavour but somewhat soft, for the water was warm. The boys were too hungry, however, to be particular.

There was nothing with which to build a shelter, but it was not high enough up here to make any noticeable difference with the warmth of the night, and they had seen no signs of wild animals, so they did not hesitate to sleep in the open.

During supper Rod, who had been silent for some time, suddenly remarked, "I wish we could raise a flag up there on the summit as a signal to passing ships. Then one might come and take us off."

"We could easily cut a tree for a pole,"

220 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

said Fred, "but what have we for a flag big enough to be seen from a distance? We can't any of us spare our shirts or coats."

"That's the trouble," mused Rod. "I can't think of anything we could use."

"How would a sleeping-mat do?" Dick suggested. "But we haven't any rope except what's left of the coil down at camp and that's a long way off."

"We might use a bush-rope," said Karl.

"But there isn't any nearer than the thick woods down there,"

"I know," answered Karl quietly, "but we could get one and make another trip up here, couldn't we? We don't want to use our bow-strings, but it seems to me that we don't want to let the slightest chance of rescue slip either."

"That's just what I think," Roderick agreed, "and I'm in favour of going down to the plantation to-morrow, and then some of us coming back the next day and raising a flag, while the others wait at the clearing. Now that we know the way we can make the trip up and back in a day if we don't linger."

"I think that is a good plan," the scout-

master said, and, the others assenting, it was agreed upon.

A watch-fire was built and by eight o'clock the boys stretched themselves out on their sleeping-mats on the sand under the clear, starry sky. Two to a blanket, the rubber blankets covered four, keeping off the dew effectually. The others had to be content with mat coverings. Bobby, who insisted on taking his turn to-night, took first watch.

Dick went on guard at three. He had been on duty for nearly an hour when he thought he saw something moving near some rocks just above the beach a little distance away. The moon had gone down and beyond the little circle of firelight there was nothing but star-light. Dick fastened his eyes on the rock and presently saw a dark form about the size of a cow; he thought, come from behind the rock and slowly descend the shelving beach to the water.

He took a firm hold of Fred's little rifle and waited. Presently a second form followed the first. It flashed through Dick's mind that if he kept perfectly still the beasts, which evidently had come to the lake

222 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

to drink, might not notice him and retreat as quietly as they had come. If he shot or made any disturbance, however, the animals might attack, for he had no idea what fierce beasts of prey they might be. So he sat rigid with the rifle across his knees.

The dark figures lingered for a while in the shallow water, then turned and slowly and quietly made their way up the beach. One of them paused for a moment, and, Dick thought, though it was hard to see in the darkness, that it turned its head in his direction, probably noticing the camp-fire. But evidently the beast was not curious, for it went on again in a moment, and soon disappeared behind the rocks, followed by its companion.

Dick drew a long breath. He kept a sharp lookout, however, for the rest of his watch, not only in that direction but in every other, for he had an uneasy feeling that if wild animals came down to the water to drink they might appear at any moment from any direction. But he saw no other moving thing for the rest of his watch.

At four he roused Harold, told him what he had seen, and cautioned him to keep a

sharp lookout and not to let the fire burn down. Harold felt a chill run up his spine at the thought of watching for strange beasts in the darkness, but he was ashamed to show, especially to Dick, who was rather given to taunting him with cowardice and laziness, that he was afraid. So he answered quietly that he would keep close watch, took the gun, and seated himself on a rock that gave him a good lookout in every direction.

He had been on duty less than half an hour, when he saw, just as Dick had seen, a dark figure, which in the dim light seemed to his excited imagination almost as big as an elephant, come out from behind the rocks and descend the beach. If such a thing had happened to him a few weeks before Harold would have cried out and roused the others, but he had gained greatly in self-command and self-reliance during his stay on the island. So he set his teeth and waited to see what would happen next. Having drunk all it wanted, the beast, to the boy's horror, turned and came slowly along the beach. Harold still waited, however, determined not to give the alarm until it became necessary.

224 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

The animal had gone but a few feet when it stopped still, alarmed probably by the fire. Harold got up, moved cautiously, his knees trembling, to the fire and put on more wood. The blaze flared up suddenly and the creature, uttering a low, bellowing sound, turned and fled back along the beach and up behind the rocks where the others had gone. As for Harold, he sank down on his rock and wiped the perspiration from his forehead.

XXVI

WILD CATTLE

DICK and Harold told their experiences to Dr. Cameron early next morning. He commended them both for courage and good sense, and Dick told Harold frankly that he never would call him a coward again. The boys were eager to examine the tracks left in the sand.

"They look like cattle tracks," said Rod, who was well versed in tracking, "but much smaller."

"I am inclined to think that the animals are wild cattle," his father answered. "I hope we may come across more of them. Beef would certainly be a welcome addition to our bill of fare."

While Roderick and Harold got breakfast the others walked along the lake shore to a wooded place to cut a flag-pole. The cooks were cleaning fish when Harold,

226 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

glancing up, uttered a startled exclamation.

"Look! over there by those bushes!"

A little distance off on the plain Rod saw a dark-coloured animal something like an ox but smaller. It was grazing on the tufts of grass and evidently had not noticed them.

"That must be the beast you saw last night," whispered Rod excitedly. "I'm going to see if I can get a shot at it."

Taking his bow and several arrows he crept cautiously towards the animal, followed by Harold, whose own bow was unstrung, but who had picked up Fred's. Fortunately the breeze was blowing towards them and the beast did not raise its head. Rod approached as near as he dared and let fly an arrow. It struck in the neck and stuck there, but the wound was evidently slight, for the startled ox made off at full speed. A shaft sent by Harold an instant after missed entirely.

"It's of no use," said Rod. "My arrow in its thick skin only stung it, I guess. We might as well go back to our fish."

When the others returned from their walk they brought with them a tall, straight,

young tree for a flag-pole. They had seen pink and white water-lilies growing among the reeds at the other end of the lake, but had not been able to reach them. Dick had nearly sunk in the mud in making the attempt and the others had had to go to his rescue.

"We'll hope for another chance," said Dr. Cameron, when Roderick told of his unsuccessful shot, "but I'm afraid we'll have to use the guns."

"I've only two cartridges left," said Fred.

"I'm a little better off than that. If we come across more cattle I'll see if I can bring one down."

After breakfast—fish, three potatoes, two and a half sago cakes, an orange and a mango—Rod, Karl and the younger boys carried the flag-pole to the upper plateau, while Dr. Cameron and Fred went hunting.

Rounding the end of the lake and crossing the little stream, the hunters found that the plain narrowed, the grass became more plentiful and the bushes and shrubs thicker. On passing a shoulder of rock which jutted out from the steep slope into the plain, they came suddenly upon an ox grazing not

228 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

more than fifty yards away. It raised its head and they dropped behind the rock. Hearing nothing more and seeing nothing to startle it, the animal resumed its grazing.

The Doctor, peeping cautiously over the rock, took good aim and fired. The wounded animal jumped into the air with a bellow, but not being fatally hurt started to run, when Fred sacrificed one of his precious cartridges, hitting the ox in the head and bringing it down. As the hunters ran towards it they caught sight of a whole herd of bellowing cattle making off down a ravine.

"We've killed their guard," said the Doctor. "These wild cattle usually feed in herds, stationing sentinels a little distance away to give warning of the approach of danger."

The ox, which was dead, was a handsome animal, blackish brown in colour with a black head marked with white. Its straight, pointed horns sloping back over the neck and low hanging dewlap were more like those of an antelope than of an ox.

"We can't take the whole carcass with

us," said the Doctor. "But we'll cut out the best parts." And he went to work to remove the skin.

Just as the other boys reached the upper plateau they heard the shooting and, dropping the pole, hastened down to see what had happened. Dick was in such a hurry that he tripped and rolled most of the way down the slope. Without stopping to investigate his bruises he picked himself up and continued on the run, being the first to reach the hunters.

The best parts of the meat were cut off, wrapped in green leaves and in pieces of the hide, and distributed among the boys to be carried in their knapsacks. They then climbed to the upper plateau and began the return journey.

Going down the mountain was swifter work than coming up, though rather dangerous on the steep slopes and bare ledges. Their loads of guns, axes, bows, quivers, sleeping-mats and full knapsacks made the descent troublesome indeed. But there were no accidents more serious than bruises and a twisted right arm for Bobby. They decided not to stop to eat until they reached

230 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

the old plantation, as they had nothing left but beef.

They had almost reached the clearing when Dr. Cameron caught his foot on a root that was concealed by the decaying leaves, and fell, twisting his ankle, so that he was forced to limp the rest of the way.

It was nearly two o'clock when they arrived at the clearing and the boys, who were famished, were obliged to stay their stomachs with bananas until Fred and Bobby got dinner ready. The beef did not prove to be so very tough as the ox was a young one, and it certainly tasted good. They made away with large quantities, together with sweet potatoes, boiled beans, cucumbers and water-melon.

Immediately after dinner Karl placed the rest of the meat in a hole to roast as he knew it would not keep uncooked, and Fred and Rod went into the forest to cut a strong, slender liana to be used instead of rope for their flag-raising.

They followed the half-obliterated path that led from the enclosure gate. They had not gone very far when they found the way blocked by a great pile of rubbish at least

four feet high. It was a rough pyramid in shape and composed of leaves, sticks, stones and earth that had evidently, from the appearance of the ground, been scraped together.

"What on earth?" exclaimed Rod, as he came to a standstill before this queer obstruction. "Do you suppose some beast or snake lives inside that heap? How did it happen anyway?"

"Do you think it could have been made by ants?" queried Fred, much puzzled.

"I can't imagine. We'll ask father about it. We'd better not investigate it too closely now."

They turned away reluctantly, for their curiosity was aroused. While searching for a suitable creeper they came upon two other piles smaller than the first. The scoutmaster was much interested when he heard of the mound and, in spite of his lame ankle, he went at once to look at it, accompanied by all the others.

"It's a brush turkey's nest," he said.

"A nest!" exclaimed Rod. "Do you mean that a bird built that pile?"

"Not one bird but a number of them.

282 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

They have probably been using it for some time. Let's see if we can find some eggs."

Poking about in the mound with a stick he soon found a dozen reddish eggs, each about four inches long. In the meanwhile he explained that the brush-turkey has large, strong feet and long, curved claws by means of which it rakes together leaves and sticks and buries its eggs in the mass, leaving them to be hatched out by the sun and the heat of the decaying rubbish. The young birds are full-fledged and quite able to care for themselves when they break their shells and force their way through the pile. All but two of the eggs proved to be fresh and were cooked for supper. The lads found them rich and pleasant eating.

The night passed quietly until towards morning when the boys were awakened by the excited chattering of monkeys in the fruit trees. The scoutmaster thought that a snake or an animal of some kind must have been after them. The disturbance soon ceased, and, except for the humming of insects and the cries of night-birds, all was quiet again.

XXVII

LOST IN THE FOREST

JUST after sunrise Roderick and Karl started on their trip up the mountain.

Dr. Cameron had intended to go with them, but his ankle was too lame to permit him. Making better speed than on the day before, the boys reached the summit a few minutes before noon. The sun was frightfully hot and they were dripping with perspiration, so, as there was no shelter here, they decided to raise their flag as quickly as possible.

Digging a hole in the hard-baked ground with only an axe and their jack-knives for tools was hard work, but they finally got the pole planted firmly, bracing it with guy-ropes attached to stakes they had made the night before and had brought with them. As they had no pulleys they could not make a proper rigging, but were obliged to tie the mat flag to the pole. They had cut three

234 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

grooves for this purpose, and after the staff was in place Rod climbed it and fastened the mat on at half-mast.

"It ought to be upside down," he said, "but it hasn't any up or down to it, so half-mast is the nearest to a distress signal we can get."

It took more than an hour to get the flag up, but as there was no shelter here they decided to go back down to the forest's edge to eat their lunch.

"It looks to me," said Rod, as he stood at the edge of the plateau, "as if there was a gully or something of the sort over there to the right. Let's go over and perhaps we can find a better place to get down."

Ten minutes' walk brought them to the place he had noticed, a gully or rift in the mountain-side that formed a natural path where the difficulties of getting down were much less.

Where vegetation began the growth was at first so scrubby that they were obliged to go some distance before the trees became large and thick enough to afford shelter from the burning sun.

"I never was so hot in my life," ex-

claimed Rod as they dropped down on the ground. "Don't you think it's worse up here than it was yesterday? My head and eyes are aching from the sun."

"Yes, there isn't nearly as much wind and that makes the sun seem worse."

They had brought their lunch ready to eat as they did not want to spend any time in cooking.

"Isn't that another brush-turkey's nest over there?" said Karl, as they resumed their journey.

"It certainly is. Let's get some eggs for supper.—Look there," as they approached the mound, "there's a turkey at work."

A dark-brown bird, more like a medium-sized hen than a turkey, was scratching industriously with its long, curved claws, making the leaves and rubbish fly in a shower. The boys watched until she had finished her task of covering her egg and had hopped off through the undergrowth. Then they went up to the mound, and, poking around in it, took out half a dozen eggs. Catching sight of another mound a little way off they visited that and took out four more eggs. They wrapped them in leaves

236 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

and moss and stowed them away in their knapsacks. As they were leaving the second mound Karl called Rod's attention to a big fig-tree a little distance away.

"That's the queerest one we've seen yet," he said. "Can't we go and look at it? It won't take but a minute."

The gnarled roots of the fig covered a large extent of ground. They spread out from the trunk in great sheets, separating into rootlets which writhed and twisted over and around one another in an inextricable tangle. The boys walked around the tree, spending more time than they realized in examining this freakish growth. The forest here was thicker and they were evidently on a ledge or plateau, for the ground was quite flat instead of sloping.

"Well," said Roderick finally, "we mustn't spend any more time here. We'll strike right across the woods to the path we came up by. We can tell it easily enough when we come to it."

They turned to go, but Karl, his head raised to get a last look at the forest of spreading stems above him, was not paying enough attention to his feet, and the first

thing he knew he went sprawling, face down, across a great bunch of roots. He disentangled his feet and picked himself up slowly, his hand to his face.

"Did you hurt yourself?" asked Rod.

"No," Karl replied slowly, "not—much—but I did something worse. I've smashed my glasses to bits."

"You've cut your eye," exclaimed Rod, catching sight of blood.

"It's nothing, just a scratch on the lid," was the indifferent reply. Karl stood still for a moment, looking ruefully down at the broken bits of glass and bent and twisted frames in his hand. Then he straightened up with a little shrug.

"It's no use crying over smashed glasses," he said. "I'm awfully near-sighted. It runs in the family and I've worn glasses ever since I was a little fellow. But I'll have to get along without them now. Go on, Rod, and I'll follow."

They walked along in silence for some time. Karl's mind was fully occupied with making his way through underbrush and creepers. He felt rather helpless without his glasses, for their loss had restricted his

238 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

range of vision considerably, and he stumbled several times. Rod had felt quite sure that they were going in the right direction, but after a while he began to have his doubts. Finally he stopped.

"I believe we are going the wrong way," he said. "The ground ought to slope up to the left of us. Instead it slopes down. We must be turned clear around."

"We ought to be going southeast to reach our path," answered Karl. "Let's look at my compass."

Karl had a very good compass which he carried in a little leather pocket fastened to his belt. As he drew it out he uttered an exclamation of dismay. The metal case was bent and battered. He pried it open with difficulty, only to find the compass so bent and smashed that the needle would not turn at all.

"It's useless," he said. "I must have fallen on it."

The trees were so close together here that it was impossible to see the position of the sun.

"It seems to me," said Roderick after a moment's thought, "that the best and quick-

est thing we can do is to go up the mountain until we come to the edge of the woods. Then we can follow along the edge until we come to our trail. I wish we'd never left it."

Accordingly they turned and went up the slope which was more gradual here. They had not gone far, when they were halted by an impenetrable, thorny thicket. So they were obliged to turn and skirt its edge, keeping a sharp lookout for a place to get through. The forest was thick with undergrowth and the two lads struggled along with considerable difficulty for more than half an hour, before they reached a place where they could resume their climb up the slope. The ascent was steeper now and the ground covered almost knee-deep with decayed leaves into which they sank at every step. They struggled on, hot and tired.

Suddenly Rod, who had been forcing his way through a thicket, stopped still in dismay. The ground in front of him, instead of rising, sloped away sharply. Again he was in doubt. Had they been climbing the mountain-side or only a ridge lying across it? Was this merely a ravine in front of

240 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

him or was it the true downward slope? The trees were so thick that he could not see far enough to tell. He was utterly at a loss to know which way to go.

For some minutes the two boys stood silent and puzzled. Then Karl offered a suggestion.

"Can't we climb a tree and get the direction of the sun?" he said.

"It's the only thing I know of to do," was the answer.

Rod looked at his watch. It was five minutes to four. It was only two-fifteen when they finished their lunch. They had been wandering about for nearly two hours. The trees here rose tall, straight and close together and it was five or ten minutes before they found a tarrippe tree wreathed with creepers that Rod thought he could climb.

Clinging to the stout vines he worked his way up slowly. But just as he reached up to grasp the first branch, an ugly, green head was thrust out from the leaves, almost touching his hand.

XXVIII

A STRANGE SHELTER

IN his fright Rod almost fell out of the tree. Fortunately his left leg caught in the creeper and kept him from going to the ground. Quickly he seized a hanging liana and, extricating his leg, swung clear of the branches and the snake. Luckily the bush-rope was a strong one and he could descend it hand over hand to within four feet of the ground.

Karl, who was standing beneath the tree, eating a fallen trap-fruit, was surprised indeed when Rod dropped beside him.

"I'll not climb any more fruit trees," said Rod emphatically; "I'll try some other kind."

They searched for some minutes before finding another tree that bore no fruit and was possible to climb. It took a good deal of courage for Roderick to make a second attempt, but their desperate situation nerved

him to it. The result was unsatisfactory, however. He was able to locate the position of the sun indeed, but the surrounding trees being most of them taller than the one he was on, he could not get any view of the country, not even a glimpse of the summit of the mountain.

"We've certainly been going down instead of up," he said as he reached the ground. "As near as I can tell we've been going about southwest, so we must be on the down slope, but this ridge fooled us. We surely didn't cross anything like it on the way up, so we must be way off the track. I haven't the faintest notion where we are."

"Well," said Karl, "if we should come across a place where we've been before I doubt if I should know it without my glasses. Things look so different. About all I can do is to follow you. At any rate we know which is up and which is down now. If we keep on going down we've got to come out on the shore sooner or later, and then we can get back to the camp and up to the plantation."

"But we can't do all that today. Finding the plantation except by accident looks

hopeless to me. Let's keep on down the mountain in as straight a line as we can, looking for a good place to spend the night. I don't see what else we can do."

They trudged on downhill, trying to keep as direct a path as possible, cutting a blaze, breaking off a limb or trampling down a bush here and there to mark their way so that they might retrace it and start over again if necessary, and so searchers might follow if they came upon the trail. There was not much danger of going around in a circle as lost persons often do, for the sloping ground guided them. As they went on the undergrowth became less dense and walking was not quite so hard.

They had been going for about an hour when Karl said, "We must find a place to spend the night before long. Darkness will come down on us before we know it."

"We might climb a tree if it wasn't for the snakes," Rod answered, "but I think I'd rather take my chances on the ground. I don't like the idea of just camping down under a tree, though. We've no notion what may be wandering around in these woods at night."

244 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

"Isn't that a fig-tree over there? I wonder if we couldn't camp under it?"

They soon found an opening under the spreading roots wide enough for them to enter.

"I hope," said Karl, as he peered into the semi-darkness under the great tree, "that some wild animal hasn't been ahead of us and made a lair here. I suppose the only way to find out is to investigate." And he grasped his axe firmly as he passed between the roots.

They found the place untenanted. They had to step down as they went in, for the ground under the protecting circle of roots was almost bare of leaves, while around the tree there was a thick covering a foot or more deep. When they stood in the centre of the enclosure the trunk was four or five feet above their heads, and the great roots spread out in every direction, making a comfortable chamber.

The ground was hard and dry and they found no traces of snakes or animals. There were strong spider-webs across some of the openings, but Karl wisely suggested that if they did not disturb the spiders, the

spiders probably would not bother them. To make the place more secure against animals they cut thorny bushes and banked them in the spaces between the roots, thorns projecting outward, leaving only a narrow opening for an entrance and a few places higher up for smoke to escape. By the time the work was completed and a good supply of firewood gathered and placed inside their chamber, night had fallen.

Rod took out his fire-drill and soon had a blaze which lit up the strange chamber cheerfully. A small piece of cooked meat, a couple of cold sweet potatoes and two oranges remained from lunch, and these with the turkey eggs roasted in the ashes, for they had no cooking utensils, made a good meal.

Both of them were worn out with their long, hard day's travel, too tired and too anxious to talk much, but they made a determined effort to be cheerful and to make the best of a hard situation.

Outside their tree-shelter the night was as black as pitch, and the forest, instead of being silent, was alive with strange, uncanny noises. There was an incessant buzzing and

246 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

humming of insects. Owls, hawks and other night-birds called back and forth through the woods, and from time to time a long, wailing cry resembling somewhat the voice of a whip-poor-will was heard.

"Do you remember how the owls scared poor Hal the first night he stood guard?" said Karl, smiling.

"I don't blame him a bit," Rod answered. "Those owls and that whip-poor-will, or whatever it is, give me a queer feeling now, though I know perfectly well what they are and that they are harmless. They sound so queer and uncanny out there in the dark."

"I wonder," mused Karl, "if it wasn't the crying of night-birds that first gave rise to the stories about ghosts and spirits wailing around the woods at night."

"I shouldn't be surprised. Listen. Wouldn't it be easy to imagine that that screech-owl away off in the woods was a banshee wailing? I never realized until this moment how easy it would be if you didn't know any better, to people the woods at night with evil spirits and ghosts and banshees. Imagine what it would be like here with a storm coming up. Ugh," and he

shuddered a little, though he laughed at himself for doing it.

"You'd better call a halt on your imagination," said Karl with a smile, "or you'll be as scared as the traveller in the enchanted forest in 'Undine.' We'll be lucky if nothing worse than our owl-banshees disturbs us to-night. We're both dead tired, but only one of us had better sleep at a time, don't you think?"

"I suppose so," Roderick assented. "Let's do it in two-hour watches. I am awfully tired, but I don't feel as if I could go to sleep now. I'll take first watch."

"Then I think I'll try a nap. Call me if anything happens." So saying, Karl rolled up his knapsack for a pillow and stretched himself out on the hard ground.

Rod's thoughts were not very cheerful ones as he sat by the fire with the strange forest sounds all around him. From the perils of the night here in the woods, they turned to his father, Bobby and the others. How anxious and worried they must be. His father, he felt sure, would start out to search for them the first thing in the morning. But what chance was there of his find-

248 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

ing them? It would not do to wait for that. They must go on till they came to the sea and could find their way back to the others. Then his thoughts wandered to those at home so many thousand miles away, his mother and his little sister, and a great wave of homesickness swept over him. Would no one ever find them here and take them back home again?

At this moment he became aware of two balls of fire gleaming at him from an opening between the roots. The hole was four or five feet above the ground, so the beast that owned those fiery eyes must either have been a very large one, or something that climbs up the trunks of trees.

Seizing a burning stick from the fire Rod approached the opening. The fiery eyes shifted; he caught a glimpse of a gleam of white, the animal's breast perhaps, and then, frightened by the blazing brand, the red balls disappeared.

Rod went to the hole and looked out, but could see nothing but the black night, lit by an occasional streak of moonlight penetrating through the thick trees.

His watch wore on slowly and at last the

time came to rouse Karl who was sleeping serenely on his hard bed. He told Karl of the fiery-eyed beast and the latter promised to keep a lookout for it. It must be admitted that Karl's thoughts were no pleasanter than Rod's. Homesickness gripped him too. He could not shake off memories of his pleasant, cheery home, his father, mother, brothers and sisters. He thought of the little family excursions and simple amusements they all loved, of the happy evenings together with music and books, and, wonderful as the island was, strange and interesting as were the things he had seen and done, he felt for the moment that he hated it all. Let him once get home and find them all safe, and he would never leave them again, never!

A rustling sound in the leaves outside attracted his attention. He went to a little hole and looked out. At first he could see nothing but a streak of moonlight across the dead leaves. Then he thought he saw something moving. He strained his short-sighted eyes, lamenting as he had a hundred times before, his broken glasses. A small animal was moving cautiously along in front of the

250 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

tree. The ray of moonlight struck it and he saw it fairly distinctly, a light-coloured shape about the size of a fox, marked with black spots. Farther on the leaves rustled again. The little animal jumped back suddenly, a sickening odour of musk filled the air, and the beast turned and made off swiftly. Rod moved uneasily and awoke.

"Ugh, what a smell," he muttered.

"It was a civet," Karl answered. "Something frightened it but I don't see anything."

He turned back to the fire, but, glancing around a moment later, uttered a cry of terror.

XXIX

THE SNAKE. THE OLD PATH

THE firelight showed him the ugly head of a great snake thrust through the little hole, the sinuous body following. Karl seized his axe. It flashed through his mind that if he struck at the head now he would probably miss. He must let the snake come farther in until it reached the ground.

“Don’t strike yet. Wait,” he called to Rod, who had sprung up.

The latter understood and, grasping by the barrel the gun he had brought with him, waited to get in a good blow. The snake slipped through the opening until the fore part of the body rested on the ground, the head raised and hissing. Rod, less cool than Karl, struck with the stock of the gun, but his blow was not strong enough to stun the serpent, which darted its angry head towards him. Then Karl brought down his

252 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

axe, putting all the force of his strong arms into the blow. The boys sprang back and stood ready to strike again, but, though the body of the snake still wriggled and twisted, it was dead. When they were quite sure that there was no more danger they stooped to examine the dead serpent. It was of a dull brown colour and in both thickness and length one of the largest they had seen.

"That was a narrow escape," said Rod, wiping the perspiration from his forehead. "Lucky for us we weren't both asleep."

"We don't want any more intruders to-night," Karl answered. "Let's block all the holes with thorns. The smoke will find its way out between them. I'd rather choke than risk such a thing as that again."

Accordingly they blocked up all the holes they could find with bushes, though to gather them they had to leave their shelter for a few minutes. Fortunately a plentiful supply of thorny brush grew close by, for neither of them cared to venture far into the dark forest.

A short time after they had made their camp as secure as possible they were dis-

turbed again by a herd of animals passing by their shelter, but making no attempt to get in. From the grunting, Rod, who was on guard, recognized them as pigs.

Dawn found the boys up and getting their breakfast of roasted eggs. One orange furnished drink, for there was only a little water left in their water-bottles, and they decided not to use it as long as they could get juicy fruit. Roderick again climbed a tree to get his bearings and they started off, a little stiff at first from sleeping on the hard ground.

"I wish we could take the snake-skin," said Karl, "but we mustn't spend the time to get it off and it would be awkward to carry anyway."

They walked steadily for a couple of hours, still down-grade, pausing only twice to refresh themselves with fallen tampus and rambutans. Their progress was slow, for walking was hard and the lianas intertwined between the trees were a frequent hindrance. Suddenly Rod paused and looked around him with a puzzled expression.

"Doesn't this look to you like an over-

254 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

grown path running across here?" he asked.

Karl gazed about him, then stooped to examine the undergrowth and the bottoms of the trees.

"Yes," he said, "it looks as if a path had been cut through here. Is it ours, do you think?"

"No, it's older than ours, the axe marks are not fresh and it's too much overgrown. Do you suppose," Rod exclaimed excitedly, "that this can be the old path that leads away from the plantation?"

"It may be. It's worth trying anyway. But which way shall we go?"

The path, if path it was, ran across their track at an angle.

"The trail from the plantation slanted down the mountain as far as we followed it, so we'd better turn and follow it up."

Though badly overgrown the track was not difficult to trace. They had been following it for about half an hour when Rod called Karl's attention to a brush-turkey's mound a little way off to the right.

"We're coming to the birds' nests," he said. "Hello, here's where we cut our bush-rope."

Needless to say they hurried on now with lighter hearts. They had fully made up their minds that they must make their way clear through the woods to the sea, and the finding of the path was a delightful piece of good luck. A little farther on they came to the mound across the trail, and in a few minutes the plantation fence came in sight. Their loud shouts were heard by those within, and, as they entered the gate, Fred, Harold and Bobby came running to meet them. Bobby with tears in his eyes, seized his big brother in a tremendous hug, Harold grasped Karl by the hand and Fred beamed on them all.

"Where's father?" were Rod's first words.

"He and Dick went out to look for you the first thing this morning," answered Fred. "Haven't you seen anything of them? Where on earth have you been? What happened to you?"

After the wanderers had told something of their adventures, Fred said, "I wish there were some way of letting Dr. Cameron know that you have come back."

"That's just what I have been thinking,"

256 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

replied Rod. "They'll hunt for us all day, unless they find our trail. How long have they been gone?"

"A little more than two hours. They were going up to the summit by our regular trail, and if they found you had been there they were going to try to track you. We can't overtake them now. They will trace you back here all right, so the only thing to do is to wait for them."

It was after dark before Dr. Cameron and Dick arrived, having tracked the others over all their rambling and zigzag course.

"When we found the flag flying we couldn't imagine what had become of you," said the Doctor, "until Dick discovered some footprints in the loose gravel at the edge of the plateau. We followed them and found the gully you had gone down. It was not hard to follow your trail in the woods to the place where you ate your lunch and where you took eggs from the turkeys' nests. Then we traced you to the big tree. There Dick picked up some bits of glass. We couldn't think how they came there, until Dick guessed that Karl might have broken his glasses. On examining them I

found they were pieces of a lens and we felt sure that Dick was right. We couldn't understand why you started off in the wrong direction from there though."

"I thought I was right," Rod answered, "but I must have been turned around by walking around the tree."

"After that your track went along for a way and then turned."

"That was where we went down the mountain thinking we were going up," said Karl.

"From that on we were at a loss to account for your wanderings until it occurred to me that Karl might have smashed his compass as well as his glasses and that you, Rod, didn't have one. In most places we could see your footprints in the deep leaves. When we came to the fig-tree barricaded with thorns we thought you must have spent the night there, and when we found the remains of your fire and supper and the dead snake we were sure of it. We were as much surprised as you were when we struck the old path. We made up our minds then, though, that we should find you here, but I was worried about the snake. I was

258 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

afraid one of you might have been bitten."

The Doctor's strained ankle was in bad shape from his hard trip, so it was decided to remain at the plantation for a few days until he was better able to travel. Their supply of sago cakes was gone but there was plenty to eat in the garden and they had fortunately brought salt enough to last them several more days if they used it sparingly.

The next day was Saturday and the boys spent it quietly, for Rod, Karl and even Dick were very tired from their wanderings. Some new specimens of plants and insects were found, and vegetables and fruit were gathered to take down to camp. Saturday night a herd of wild pigs broke through the dilapidated fence and made considerable havoc in the garden, before the boys succeeded in driving them out. A young one was shot by Dick, so they had fresh pork for Sunday.

On Sunday Dick caught a young monkey and wanted to tame it. He tied it to one of the piles of the house with a bush-rope. At night when Fred was on guard he heard a great chattering and commotion of mon-

keys, first on the roof and then on the ground in front of the house. He investigated and drove them off, but the little monkey was gone too, the others having evidently bitten off the liana and taken the little one away with them. Dick was very much disappointed, but the Doctor explained to him that he would have had considerable trouble getting his wild pet down to camp and would very likely have lost it on the way.

Rod and Karl were anxious to keep the skin of the great, brown snake they had killed. So Monday morning, accompanied by Dick, they went back to the fig-tree to get it, having first promised the scoutmaster that they would be careful this time not to stray from the trail. They had no trouble finding their way, but they were disappointed to find the snake so over-run by ants that the skin was quite ruined.

XXX

MISFORTUNES. A SAIL!

BY Tuesday the scoutmaster's ankle was well enough to allow him to make the return trip to camp. So early in the morning the party left the little clearing, laden with all the vegetables and fruit they could carry. Although the rapidly-growing, tropical vegetation had partly blotted out their trail, enough signs remained so they had little difficulty in finding their way back. Heavily laden as they were, the trip was very tiresome and laborious, especially where they had to traverse thick forest and descend steep banks. Karl was especially handicapped by the loss of his glasses and got several slips and falls, with no more serious results, however, than bruises and tears in his already ragged clothes.

They had been away from their camp more than a week, and were a little anxious as to how they should find things. A herd

of pigs had evidently been rooting in the vicinity, but had done no serious harm. The thatch on the roof had been pulled apart a little by monkeys and the ants had got into the house and had done considerable damage. Fortunately they had not been able to injure the cylinders of sago which were thickly wrapped in palm leaves and packed in bamboos, with other slightly larger, inverted bamboos fitting closely over them. But the ants had got at the specimens, and had ruined at least half the insects that the boys had collected with such care. This was an especial grief to the Doctor and Karl, for the collections were of considerable scientific value. Tired as the boys were, it was necessary to set to work at once to protect the provisions they had brought with them from these insect pests and to rid the house of them. They even found it necessary to remove the old thatch and put on new, but this they could not do until the next day.

Bad luck befell them in the next two weeks. For some reason they could not explain game suddenly became scarce. The pigeons were shy and difficult to shoot, the

262 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

pigs had entirely disappeared, and lines and traps yielded few fish. There was plenty of sago, however, and the vegetables and fruit they had brought from the plantation, and crabs still frequented the beach.

The second day after their return Fred, who had gone to the black sand beach to set crab traps, saw two pretty, black and white birds, with feathery crests and elevated tails, scratching a hole in the sand. He was careful not to disturb them, but returning that way later, he investigated the hole and found a large, pale-red egg, resembling a brush-turkey's egg, buried under about a foot of sand. The egg proved very good eating, richer than a hen's egg. The birds, the scoutmaster said, were maleos. They bury their eggs in the hot sand, six or eight in a season, and, without further care, let the heat hatch them. The little birds on breaking the shell, work their way up through the sand and run off at once to the forest. This being the right season many maleos now began to frequent the beach and the boys found a good supply of eggs, but were careful to take only the most recently laid as only these were fit to eat.

Moreover they did not want to rob the old maleos of their entire brood.

Though lightning flashes could be seen along the horizon almost every night, there had not been a drop of rain for nearly a month, and the weather was exceedingly hot, making it necessary for the lads to stay in the shade during the hottest parts of the day.

They had not had many accidents since landing on the island, but now a series of trying mishaps befell them. A crab he was trying to trap caught Harold by the little finger and injured it badly, breaking the bone. Dr. Cameron set it as well as he could, but was very anxious about it, fearing it might stiffen. While out on the reef at low tide, Bobby stepped on something, plant or animal, that poisoned his foot badly. In spite of antiseptics, it was extremely painful and laid him up for several days.

When on an expedition with Fred to the plantation to get more food supplies, Dick had his thigh torn by a babirusa, which he foolhardily tried to shoot with bow and arrow. He might have been killed if Fred

264 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

had not used up his last precious cartridge on the furious beast. The wound bled very freely, the dark colour of the blood indicating that a vein had been severed. Fred knew he must stop the bleeding but he had nothing for a bandage, his one handkerchief having been lost long before. Still the bleeding must be stopped. After a moment's hesitation he slipped off his shirt, tore out one sleeve and tied it as tight as he could around Dick's leg below the wound. He then slipped a stick through the knot and twisted it with all his strength until the bleeding lessened and finally stopped. In the hot weather the wound began to fester, and by the time Dick got back to camp, carried most of the way on Fred's back, his leg was in bad shape and caused him much pain and Dr. Cameron much anxiety.

Only three days later Fred had a mishap, slipping on the cliff and spraining his right wrist so badly that he could not use it for several weeks.

As for Karl he found himself seriously inconvenienced by the loss of his glasses, especially in his favourite occupation of hunting specimens. The other boys, when

they realized how handicapped he was and how uncomplainingly he bore his troubles, sympathized with him, and even Dick stopped teasing him and brought him all the strange insects, plants and shells he could find, until his own accident put a stop to his wanderings. Several minor mishaps befell Karl as the direct result of his near-sightedness, but the accident that happened to Roderick might easily have been the most serious of all.

A couple of days before Dick's encounter with the babirusa he and Rod went to the wreck for some planks. It was an extremely hot day with almost no breeze and Rod complained that the sun made his head ache. They went out to the old boat and worked for some time to get a couple of planks loose. They had just reached the beach with the second one, when Rod suddenly dropped his end, swayed and fell on the sand. Dick sprang to him to find him unconscious, his face dark purplish red.

He knew at once what had happened. Seizing Rod by the shoulders he dragged him across the strip of sand to the shade of the overhanging cliff. Then he ran back

266 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

to the shore, filled his hat with water and dashed it over Rod's head and face. He knew that colder water would be better, but there was none to be had, so he soaked Rod's head again and again with sea-water. After a while the deep colour began to fade from the older boy's face and presently he opened his eyes.

When he had recovered somewhat he succeeded in getting up the cliff into the shade of a group of palms, but his head ached so frightfully and the sun blinded him so, that he decided to remain there until nearly nightfall before attempting the trip back to camp. He lay there, his head supported a little and covered with wet leaves, until nearly five o'clock. Even then the sun nearly blinded him, and Dick had to put his arm around him, half-supporting him, half-guiding him, as they started back to camp. After the sun went down he felt a little better, though his head still ached terribly. He stopped to bathe it in the stream, and it was after dark before they reached camp, where Dr. Cameron was beginning to be anxious about them.

Roderick suffered terribly with headache

all night, but towards morning the pain lessened. For several days, however, his head troubled him a great deal and his eyes, which were much inflamed, could not bear the sunlight. The inflammation soon decreased, but as a result of the sunstroke he had to be very careful about going into the hot sun, as only a short exposure to the glare on rocks, beach or sea, brought back the pain in his head and eyes.

All these troubles combined with the hot weather made this period of the patrol's stay on the island the hardest of all. The novelty and excitement had rather worn off, and, although there were still interesting things to do, the boys were all becoming very anxious about getting home. With Dick and Bobby laid up, Rod unable to go from shelter except in early morning and towards night, Fred with his right arm useless, Harold with a crippled hand, and Karl cut off from really enjoying his favourite occupations, time dragged slowly enough and thoughts turned homeward persistently.

Some interest was aroused by the doings of a young parakeet that Harold found

268 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

caught in a thicket and adopted as a pet. Training the handsome little bird to talk and not to be afraid of the lads whiled away many hours.

Since the injury to Dick's leg the task of climbing for cocoanuts had fallen to Roderick. One morning just after breakfast he climbed a tall tree near the shore. As he neared the top he happened to glance seaward and nearly tumbled from the tree in his excitement. Not very far away across the water was a sail!



XXXI

RESCUE AND THE TALE OF THE *FLYING FISH*

SHOUTING to the others Rod came sliding down the tree without waiting for nuts. With his father's field-glass he climbed up again, while the others gathered on the edge of the cliff and eagerly awaited the approach of the boat. For it was approaching. There was no doubt of it. Then just as they were rejoicing in the thought of rescue, the boat tacked and appeared to be about to change its course.

"If we only had some way to signal them," groaned Fred.

But Rod wasted no time on "ifs." He tossed the field-glass down to his father, and, clinging to the tree with his legs, pulled off his shirt and waved it wildly, leaning as far out from the tree as he dared. The others joined in, waving hats, shirts, any-

270 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

thing that happened to be handy, and shouting at the tops of their voices.

Apparently their signals were seen, for the boat put about again and came straight for them. As she drew nearer they could see that she was a small sailing schooner but not apparently a native boat.

In spite of his lame leg Dick scrambled out on the rocks where he thought he could be plainly seen and began to signal with his arms. At first he got no answer, but he kept on, and, as the schooner drew nearer, he was seen and answered with flags.

"What ship is that?" he signalled.

"The *Mary W.* Are you Dr. Cameron and party?"

Dick said afterwards that this question set him trembling so with joy and excitement that he could scarcely control his arms to answer.

A boat put off from the schooner, and, as it drew near, the boys were overjoyed to recognize Captain Morton, accompanied by a strange man, in the stern. The men at the oars appeared to be all natives. They had to circle the end of the little reef which curved out around the mouth of the stream,



*The Boys Were Overjoyed to Recognize Captain Morton,
Accompanied by a Strange Man, in the Stern.*

TALE OF THE *FLYING FISH* 271

and Dr. Cameron and the boys hastened down to meet their rescuers.

It was certainly a shabby and strange-looking group that welcomed Captain Morton and his companion. The lads' clothes were worn and ragged. Their hair and Dr. Cameron's beard had been crudely trimmed with pocket-scissors, while the three older boys had a more or less conspicuous growth of down on cheeks and lips, particularly noticeable in black-haired Fred. All were tanned almost as dark as natives, Rod's and Harold's skins being several shades darker than their hair. Dick and Bobby wore crude, shapeless hats of palm-leaf woven by themselves, Fred had his arm in a sling of the same material, and Dick used a stout stick to help his limping gait. A disreputable looking crowd they certainly were, but no one thought of that as they exchanged hearty greetings, nor were the boys in the least ashamed of the lumps in their throats that made their voices husky.

For a few minutes there was a regular bedlam of questions and answers, but, after they had climbed the bank to the house, Dr.

272 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

Cameron ordered the boys to keep still while Captain Morton told them of his experiences and what had become of the *Flying Fish*. It was an extraordinary story they listened to.

When the storm began to come up the Captain would have fired a gun as a signal to the exploring party to return, but the two little cannons had been disabled in the preceding storm and had not as yet been remounted, so this was impossible. He waited as long as he dared, but he was afraid that his anchor might drag and the ship be driven ashore by the storm. So he was finally obliged to put out to sea, as there was no harbour.

When the sailors who had brought the party ashore saw that the Captain was preparing to put out to sea, they immediately launched their boat and hastened to row towards the ship. Captain Morton did not notice them until they were more than half-way to the vessel, and then, as the wind had begun to come up and the thunder to crash, it was too late to order them back. They had just reached the ship when the full fury of the storm broke. Unfortunately the

damage to the machinery had been more serious than the engineer had at first supposed, and it was not yet in running order, so the little craft had nothing but her sails to trust to.

The storm was a terrific one, a veritable hurricane. The steering-gear was wrecked, the masts broken, and more than once during that terrible night they all thought they were going to the bottom. The Captain was struck by a falling spar and knocked senseless. Morning found them still afloat, but an unmanageable wreck, drifting at the mercy of wind and waves.

All day the *Flying Fish* drifted and just at dark struck a reef lying a little way out from a group of islands. Fortunately part of the boat held together, but the mate was drowned, and the unconscious Captain undoubtedly would have been, too, had it not been for the heroism of the engineer. They clung to the wreck all night and were rescued in the morning by the natives from one of the islands.

The injury to Captain Morton's head was a severe one, and for three weeks he lay in a native hut, semi-conscious and irrespon-

274 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

sible. Mr. Harvey, Dr. Cameron's assistant, who had been left aboard the schooner, was seized with a severe attack of fever and during the same period lay in a neighbouring cabin, tossing in delirium or sunk in stupor most of the time.

In the meanwhile a Malay trading vessel touched at the island and agreed to take the well men off to Macassar in the island of Celebes, but would have nothing to do with the sick ones. All of the crew except the engineer, who was now acting as nurse for the Captain and Mr. Harvey, took advantage of this offer.

When Mr. Harvey's fever went down and his mind became rational he was filled with anxiety as to the fate of Dr. Cameron and the boys, but there was nothing he could do, especially as neither he nor the engineer could understand the natives or make themselves understood. The Captain's first question when he came to himself was about his ship and crew, his second about the party on the island. He spoke a little Malay and so was able to find out where they were, but he and Mr. Harvey both recovered slowly, and it was a couple of weeks more before

TALE OF THE *FLYING FISH* 275

they were able to make the trip in an open boat to Ternate.

Hindered by contrary winds they had much trouble in reaching Ternate, and there they had to endure more delay before they found a boat willing to go out of its way to rescue the castaways. Finally an arrangement was made with the Scotch captain of a little sailing vessel, the *Mary W.* Captain Morton's idea of the location of the island was not perfect, but, after being baffled by the winds for some time, they sighted it at last.

"I thought it was the same place," said the Captain, "but I was sure of it when I saw your flag flying. I knew it would be just like you boys to be up to a thing of that kind."

"But where is Harvey?" asked the Doctor. "Why didn't he come ashore with you?"

"He's down with the fever again," answered the Captain, "and I had to leave him in Ternate. He's being well cared for though."

XXXII

HOME AGAIN

THE *Mary W.* was bound for Batavia in Java, so, not to delay kind Captain Macpherson any longer than was necessary, the Coyote Patrol said good-bye to Cameron Island and embarked at once.

"It's been a pretty good old island," said Roderick, "and it has treated us mighty well on the whole, given us plenty to eat and lots of new and interesting experiences, but just the same I'm not sorry to leave it when I think about home. I'm in such a hurry it doesn't seem as if I could wait to get there." With these sentiments the others heartily agreed.

The boys' most important baggage was their specimens and, as most of these were carefully packed in the scoutmaster's tin specimen cases or in sections of bamboo, they were soon ready to be put aboard. The lads had a few mementoes besides, the

babirusa horns, a couple of snake-skins, their bows and arrows and sleeping-mats, Karl's flute, and some little things they had made of bamboo and cocoanut shells. Harold wanted to take his parakeet, but the Doctor advised him to leave it, and when Harold realized how much happier it would be here in its native woods he consented to part with it.

Captain Macpherson was puzzled over their account of the deserted clearing. "It's not often that these people desert their own island for another," he said. "There must have been some strong reason for their going, a superstitious one perhaps."

The boys were disappointed to learn that the island had a native name of its own and that it belonged to the Dutch possessions. Nevertheless they will always call it Cameron Island.

By the time they reached Batavia the boys had got their "sea legs" again. From there cable dispatches were sent home and to the Doctor's cousin in New Guinea. Through bankers in Batavia the Doctor and Captain Morton were able to obtain the necessary funds for the return to the United States.

278 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

The boys of course had to be fitted throughout with new clothes. Batavia is a Holland Dutch town and the lads were rather amused by the foreign cut of their new clothes, but after a visit to the barber's they looked, as Fred said, "fairly respectable." Fred's wrist, Dick's leg and Harold's finger were given proper treatment by a good physician, and Karl was fitted with new glasses, which made the world look clearer, if not brighter, he said. The effect of Rod's sunstroke was slow in wearing off, and for a long time he had to be careful about going out in the hot sun.

Interesting as they found Java, they grew very impatient at the delay before they were able to start home. The arrival of messages, telling them that all their dear ones were safe and well, relieved their anxiety but increased their impatience. Before time for them to leave Mr. Harvey arrived, looking thin and ill, but overjoyed to find them safe and sound.

The voyage home, though made without accident, seemed distressingly long to the impatient boys. As the time to be spent in the trip to New Guinea had been uncertain

and as they knew it took a long time to get letters back from there, their families at home had not been particularly uneasy at first. But as time went on and they received no word they became sorely worried. A message to the Doctor's cousin in New Guinea brought answer that the party had not arrived there. On inquiry they could not find that anything had been seen of the *Flying Fish* after leaving the Caroline Islands, and an expedition to search for the missing ship was just being arranged for, when word came from Captain Morton at Ternate of the wreck of his vessel and the marooning of the Coyote Patrol on the island. This increased, rather than diminished the anxiety of those at home until the cablegrams came from Batavia.

To their companions at home the boys, who had actually been cast away for more than two months on a desert island, were of course heroes and, had they not been such good Scouts, they would have been in danger of being spoiled. From their hard experiences they had all gained much in manliness, efficiency and self-control, and on the whole had been strengthened and tough-

280 THE BOY SCOUT CRUSOES

ened physically, though all bore the marks of their hardships.

It was several months before Fred's right wrist was as strong as the left, and Dick will always bear a scar on his leg. Harold's finger was also weak for some time, but fortunately did not stiffen. The poison in Bobby's blood was soon got rid of after his return to a healthier climate, and Karl's eyes quickly recovered from their strain. The effects of Rod's sunstroke gradually passed away, too, although the experience will probably make him careful for the rest of his life.

There is not one of the boys who does not feel that the experience was worth while and of real value to him, and, as the memories of their troubles and hardships grow dimmer, they look back with genuine pleasure to those interesting days, and even talk sometimes of returning some day for another visit to "Cameron Island."

The "Billy Topsail" Books

By NORMAN DUNCAN

Each Illustrated, 12mo, cloth, net \$1.25

The Adventures of Billy Topsail

"There was no need to invent conditions or imagine situations. The life of any lad of Billy Topsail's years up there is sufficiently romantic. It is this skill in the portrayal of actual conditions that lie ready to the hand of the intelligent observer that makes Mr. Duncan's Newfoundland stories so noteworthy."—*Brooklyn Eagle*.

Billy Topsail and Company

"Another rousing volume of 'The Billy Topsail Books.' Norman Duncan has the real key to the boy heart and in Labrador he has opened up a field magnetic in its perils and thrills and endless excitements."—*Examiner*.

Billy Topsail, M. D.

A Tale of Adventure with "Doctor Luke of the Labrador."

The further adventures of Billy Topsail and Archie Armstrong on the ice, in the forest and at sea. In a singular manner the boys fall in with a doctor of the outposts and are moved to join forces with him. The doctor is Doctor Luke of the Labrador whose prototype as every one knows is Doctor Grenfell. Its pages are as crowded with brisk adventures as those of the preceding books.

BOOKS FOR BOYS

By **EDWIN C. BURRITT**

Boy Scout Crusoes

A Tale of the South Seas. Illustrated by Walter Louderback. 12mo, cloth - - - net \$1.25

This is a story for which every boy will cherish memories for years after reading. No more interesting things ever happened in a book than these experiences of the Coyote Patrol, who went in the *Flying Fish* on a long cruise in the Pacific.

By **DILLON WALLACE**

The Gaunt Gray Wolf

Illustrated, 12mo, cloth - - - net \$1.25

"Pictures with wonderful vividness the fearful cold, isolation of the people who venture into the wild for fur or animals, the strange superstitions of Indians and Eskimos, and yet the touch of nature that makes these far-away people akin to all the rest of the world."—*Indianapolis News*.

"Ungava Bob"

A Tale of the Fur Trappers. Illustrated, 12mo, cloth - - - net \$1.25

"A rarely admirable book for boys—one of the most engaging of the sort I have ever read. It is an honest story, but as appealing to the hearts and imaginations of boys as the unconscientious stories commonly offered. It will not be approached by any tale of adventure published for boys this season."—*Norman Duncan*.

By **RALPH CONNOR**

Glengarry School Days

Early Days in the Indian Lands. Illustrated, 12mo, cloth - - - net \$1.00

"When an author of Ralph Connor's undoubted genius is overtaken in that fashion things happen—and that is just what one finds in 'Glengarry School Days'—things are happening all the time."—*Brooklyn Eagle*.

"The Bishop's Shadow" Books

By L. T. THURSTON

Each Illustrated, 12mo, Cloth - net \$1.00

Billy Burns of Troop 5

Here is a Boy Scout's story which has to do with the average boy of the city. Like "The Bishop's Shadow" and "The Scout Master of Troop 5," it is fresh, breezy, clear-cut and catchy—a fine, strong, earnest, lucid book, written with the idea of helping boys to do their parts in the world's work. The author's wonderful insight into the boy nature and knowledge of his ways of work and recreation is here apparent.

The Scout Master of Troop 5

"The daily life of the city boys from whom the scouts are recruited is related, and the succession of experiences afterward coming delightfully to them—country hikes, camp life, exploring expeditions, and the finding of real hidden treasure."—*N. Y. Sun*.

The Big Brother of Sabin Street

Containing the story of Theodore Bryan
(The Bishop's Shadow)

"This volume is the sequel to the Story of Theodore Bryan, 'The Bishop's Shadow,' which came into prominence as a classic among boys' books and was written to supply the urgent demand for a story continuing the account of Theodore's work among the boys."—*Western Recorder*.

The Bishop's Shadow

"A captivating story of dear Phillips Brooks and a little street gamin of Boston. The book sets forth the almost matchless character of the Christlike bishop in most loving and lovely lines."

—*The Interior*.

FICTION WORTH READING

S. R. CROCKETT

*Author of "The Stickit Minister,"
"The Raiders," etc.*

Silver Sand

A Romance of Old Galloway. Cloth, net \$1.25.

"In this romance published only a few days after his death, we find Mr. Crockett in his familiar Wigtownshire, writing at his best, and giving us an even finer display of his powers than when he first captured his admirers. 'Silver Sand' is certainly one of the best things he ever did. Some of the characters here portrayed are among the best of his many creations, with an even added depth and tenderness."—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

CAROLINE ABBOT STANLEY

Dr. Llewellyn and His Friends

Illustrated, 12mo, cloth, net \$1.25.

Mrs. Stanley's new book is a human chronicle of absorbing interest. Humor and pathos of a rare order alternate in its pages, together with some astonishingly good delineation of negro life and character. The *Kansas City Star* says: "If there is to be a Missouri school of literature to rival the famed Indiana institution, Mrs. Stanley has fairly earned the right to a charter membership."

GRACE LIVINGSTON HILL LUTZ

The Man of the Desert

Illustrated, 12mo, cloth, net \$1.25.

The author of "The Best Man," "Marcia Schuyler," etc., enjoys no mean reputation as a weaver of sweet, wholesome romances, a reputation which "The Man of the Desert" fully maintains. Her latest book tells the love story of a daughter of luxury and a plain man facing his duty and doing his work on the home mission field of the West. Every reader of this charming story will be made to rejoice in the happy triumph over difficulties which gives to these young people the crowning joy of life, the union of kindred souls.

THURLOW FRASER

The Call of The East

A Romance of Far Formosa. Illustrated, 12mo, cloth, net \$1.25.

Here is a jewel in romance—set amid the blossom-laden islands of the Eastern seas. To its making go the record of one white man's heroism and native worth, of another's baseness and treachery; some thrilling incidents of the French invasion of Formosa; a satisfying picture of the great pioneer missionary Mackay, and a love-story as old as Eden, yet as fresh as the dews of the morning.

FICTION, JUVENILE, Etc.

CYRUS TOWNSEND BRADY

*Author of "The Little Angel
of Canyon Creek"*

A Baby of the Frontier

Illustrated, 12mo, cloth, net \$1.25.

A captivating story of pioneer days and Indian adventures. Mr. Brady is at his best throughout and relates the thrilling episodes surrounding the capture by a tribe of Cheyenne Indians of the little daughter of the commanding officer of Fort Sullivan, with vividness and power.

S. R. CROCKETT

Author of "Silver Sand," etc.

Hal o' the Ironsides: A Story of the Days of Cromwell

Illustrated, 12mo, cloth, net \$1.25.

Crockett's last story. A rip-roaring tale of the days of the great Oliver—days when the dogs of war were let loose in English meadows, when the unbeatable Ironsides invoked the spirit of the God of battles, and "the gallants of England struck home for the King."

WILLIAM SAGE

Author of "Robert Turney" Etc.

A Maid of Old Virginia

A Romance of Bacon's Rebellion. Illust., net \$1.25.

A fascinating story of early days of the Old Dominion, when Sir William Berkeley was governor at Jamestown, during the Colony's revolt against oppression, intermingled with adventures of Indian warfare.

CLARA E. LAUGHLIN

When My Ship Comes Home

Decorated and Illustrated by Samuel M. Palmer.
16mo, cloth, net \$1.00.

The latest of Miss Laughlin's stories well sustains her reputation for originality and refreshment. None of her previous works excel in quaintness or charm this narrative of the two "argosies," which both eventually make safe harbor.

MARTHA S. GIELOW

Author of "Uncle Sam," etc.

The Light on the Hill

A Tale of the Mountains. Illustrated, net \$1.00.

"A simple story of life in the Appalachian Mountains, which is full of pathos and which shows the true nobility, honesty, loyalty."—*Christian Work*.

I. T. THURSTON

Author of "The Torch Bearer," etc.

Just Girls

"Do Ye the Next Thing"

Illustrated, 12mo, cloth, net \$1.00.

"The Eight Weeks' Club Movement" of the Y. W. C. A. is the motif. "No girl will read it without realizing that there is a great work in the world for girls to do."—*Book News*.

EARLIER WORKS IN DEMAND

LATHAN A. CRANDALL

Days in the Open

A Fisherman's Answer to the Red God's Call. Decorations by Louis Rhead. Illustrated, net \$1.50.

"A delightful record of peaceful adventure where the home-trout brook 'stretches itself out in a long reach of still water in the pasture lot,' to that time when, hearing the irresistible call of the red gods, he follows them through many lands."—*Boston Transcript*.

NORMAN DUNCAN

The Bird-Store Man

An Old-Fashioned Story. Illustrated, 12mo, boards, net 75c.

"An altogether delightful hour's reading, and not without suggestions of the more serious sort which he who runs may read."—*Evening Post (N. Y.)*.

CLARA E. LAUGHLIN

Author of
"Everybody's Lousness"

Everybody's Birthright

A Vision of Jeanne d'Arc. Illustrated, 12mo, cloth, net 75c.

"A tender, heart-reaching and heart-finding story. It should add another to that series of classics for girls which have made Miss Laughlin the friend of girls and parents as well."—*Norma Bright Carson*.

WINIFRED ARNOLD

Author of "Miss Bessie's
Matrimony Bureau"

Little Merry Christmas

Illustrated, 12mo boards, net 60c.

"From the moment she alights, one wintry night, at the snow-piled station of Oatka Center, little Mary Christie begins to carry sunshine and happiness into the frosty homes, and still frostier hearts of its inhabitants."—*Presbyterian Banner*.

NORMAN HINSDALE PITMAN

Author of
"The Lady Elms," etc.

A Chinese Christmas Tree

Illustrated by Liu Hsing-p'u. Boards, net 50c.

"A pretty story indeed, and one which should help to promote friendship between members of the rising generation in the Occident and Orient."—*Congregationalist*.

**This book should be returned to
the Library on or before the last date
stamped below.**

**A fine of five cents a day is incurred
by retaining it beyond the specified
time.**

Please return promptly.

the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are employed in the public sector has increased by 1.5 million, from 2.5 million in 1980 to 4 million in 1995. The public sector has become a major employer in the UK, and its growth has been a major factor in the overall growth of the economy.

The public sector has also become a major employer of women. In 1980, women made up 40% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this figure had risen to 50%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of women in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people with disabilities. In 1980, people with disabilities made up 1% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this figure had risen to 5%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of people with disabilities in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people from ethnic minorities. In 1980, people from ethnic minorities made up 1% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this figure had risen to 5%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of people from ethnic minorities in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people from the lower social classes. In 1980, people from the lower social classes made up 1% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this figure had risen to 5%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of people from the lower social classes in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people from the lower income groups. In 1980, people from the lower income groups made up 1% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this figure had risen to 5%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of people from the lower income groups in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people from the lower education levels. In 1980, people from the lower education levels made up 1% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this figure had risen to 5%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of people from the lower education levels in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

